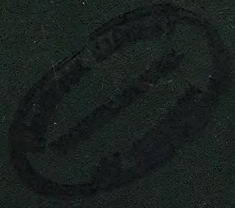


# INTERNATIONAL

## *Journal*

OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



*February*  
1961

*Drama in Christian Education—A Special Issue*







*Theme: "We Have This Stewardship"*

**PAMPHLET  
PROGRAM AIDS  
FOR**

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**May 7-14**

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# Drama in teaching and witness

WHY IS IT that Christian educators everywhere are taking an increasing interest in the use of drama in the church? Is it because of a recognition of the important role drama is playing in contemporary life both in the church and in the community at large? Is this interest the result of a search for new and fresh forms and "tools" for Christian education? Or is it because of a new appreciation of the heritage of drama, along with the other arts, and of the historic relation between drama and the church? Perhaps the interest is due to all these factors, and others. Whatever the reasons, more and more churches are making serious use of drama in all aspects of their life and work.

This increased use of drama is placing a heavy responsibility upon the program planners, those responsible for training church leaders, and those who have the task of planning the new church buildings that are going up at the rate of nearly a billion dollars a year. Effective use of drama requires an understanding of the various forms of drama, of the basic equipment and facilities required for productions, and of how to integrate drama in the life of the church. This calls for trained leadership—the better the training the better the results a church can expect. No amount of enthusiasm and good intentions can take the place of artistic training and discipline which produce the skills and abilities necessary.

Training and understanding of drama are no less necessary for the teacher of primary or junior children who wants to use creative drama in the classroom than for the person who directs formal drama for presentation in the sanctuary or fellowship hall. Each drama form has its own unique requirements. The development of Christian insight, appreciation, and values is at stake, and a church cannot afford to be shoddy, careless, superficial, or inept in its use of drama. The use of any of the art forms in the church (music, painting, literature, drama) requires the best that is available in competence and craftsmanship.

This special issue is called "Drama in Christian Education." But in a day when Christian educators are seeing their task whole, in relation to the entire life and work of the church (not only in the Sunday school, vacation and weekday church schools, and youth and adult fellowship groups), it is difficult to draw clear-cut lines between drama in Christian education and drama in the church. Christian educators are increasingly welcoming the opportunity to share in the whole life of the church, in all its aspects, and to make their contribution to that whole life. Formal drama in the fellowship hall and in the chancel are often carried on under the auspices and direction of Christian education boards or committees, and the educational values are as clearly recognized as are those of informal drama in the classroom.

With this increasing role of drama in the church more thought must be given to maintaining standards worthy of the church and of an art with a noble tradition. Amy G. Loomis, one of the pioneers in religious drama, wrote in a special issue of *motive* in April 1958: "I find this success frightening. . . . Such an embarrassing record of local church rhythmic choirs! Such a plethora of Nativity pageants! Such desperate eagerness on the part of professional and volunteer church-school workers for those promising new teaching gadgets, creative dramatics, and role playing! What are the values and where are we going?" These are the crucial questions

we must ask ourselves—what are the values of drama and what are our objectives in the development of drama in the church?

There have been a number of conferences and consultations on religious drama recently in which questions such as these have been raised: "What do we mean by religious drama?" "What is the place of drama in the church?" "What are the next steps in religious drama?"

## One of the "growing edges"

"THIS IS FOR ME!" We hope that all readers of the *Journal* are so fully aware of the importance of drama and its right use in the church that they will have the feeling at once that "this special issue is for me." The use of drama as an integral part of a church program is one of the growing edges in the development of effective communication of the gospel. Any church school teacher or other group leader who is not now using drama, in any of its forms, may well find in this issue stimulation to venture into the use of new kinds of experience with his group. A group should not start by "putting on a play." First it should have experience in creative drama, playreading, walking rehearsals, creative movement, and discussion drama, for example. Persons especially interested in the use of creative movement will look forward to a feature section in the April 1961 issue on the use of creative movement with children, written by Margaret Fisk Taylor.

Church school teachers and other group leaders will understand creative drama better if they read the other sections of this issue, also. All planning committees who may consider the use of drama in some way will find the articles helpful. The Christian education committee of board and drama committee will find the issue guidance for their own work and help in stimulating interest on the part of others in the church.

Virgil E. Foster

There are no easy answers to the questions, and there are genuine differences of opinion. Nevertheless, the search goes on for an understanding of the best ways to include drama in the witness of the church to all ages about the Christian insights, message, and mission.

This special issue of the *Journal* represents the concern of the Committee on Religious Drama of the Commission on General Christian Education about the needs of local churches in this field. It is the hope of the members of the committee that the articles will help to clarify and define the values of drama, and point a direction in which churches may move in the use of drama.

J. Blaine Fisk



This is the month that marks the beginning of Lent, the special season the Christian Church for self-examination, for soul searching, for spiritual inventory, for penitence. Why do we need a special time set apart for this? Should it not be a part of our continuing religious practice? Yes, it should be; nevertheless, human beings are great forgetters. We need reminders, not always because we forget, but because we do not want to remember. The Lenten season is a built-in aid for spiritual renewal. It helps remind us that we are among the sinners.

"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."  
(I John 1:8)

Very often a story, a poem, a painting, or a drama will also convict us. You will recall that Nathan, the prophet, told David a story that pointed the finger of guilt at him and helped him to see his own big sin. David was guilty of having sent Uriah to battle to be killed so that he could possess Bathsheba. David was self-righteous, and he was blind to his own guilt. Nathan told the dramatic story that convicted him:

"There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and other poor. The rich man had very many flocks and herds; but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. And he brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children; it used to eat of his morsel, and drink from his cup, and lie in his bosom, and it was like a daughter to him. Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was unwilling to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb, and prepared it for the man who had come to him." (II Samuel 12: 1b-4)

David's anger was aroused by this story; he was able to see guilt and sin in another person's actions. He cried out, "This man deserves to die!" And Nathan said to David, "You are the man."

The story was instrumental in helping David to see his own sin. Drama also can do this.

Shakespeare was aware of the effectiveness of drama as a "conscience catcher." In his play within a play,

# YOU ARE THE MAN

By J. Blaine FISTER

Executive Director, Department of Adult Work, Division of Christian Education, National Council of Churches; staff executive for the Committee on Religious Drama, Commission on General Christian Education, N.C.C.

Hamlet realizes that "The play's the thing wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king." And this Hamlet does; he is able to detect his uncle's guilt through drama.

Friedrich von Schiller was also aware of the power of the stage to help one see oneself, to be a mirror, to point the finger inward, saying, "You are the man." In *Die Kraniche des Ibykus* he writes: "The stage becomes a tribunal, and the evildoers, struck by the bolt of vengeance, confess their deeds."

In the closing line of George Bernard Shaw's *St. Joan*, the finger is pointed at all of us when Joan lifts up her hands to the heavens and cries out: "O God that madest this beautiful earth, when will it be ready to receive thy saints? How long, O Lord, how long?"

Modern playwrights have also consciously addressed the audience, inviting them to self-examination. In *Sweet Bird of Youth*, Tennessee Williams has the actor speak directly to the audience at the close of the play, asking not for sympathy, not even for understanding, but only that the audience might see a part of themselves reflected in what they would identify as sinful in the character of the play. "For there is no distinction; since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:22-23)

In an off-Broadway play, *The Balcony*, by a French playwright, Jean Genet, there are many characters living lives of phantasy and sheer unreality. When faced with the possibility of acting out their phantasy roles in real life, they are immobilized and unable to meet the demands of the situations. Again the playwright uses the device of having one of the

actors speak a farewell line to the audience, challenging them as they go home to their real lives to look inside and see if there is not phantasy and unreality there too, perhaps more than they saw in the play.

The dramatic method has a way of catching us and holding us as a participant. We find ourselves sitting where the players sit, feeling and thinking as they think, trying to put ourselves "in another person's shoes." This experience is good for us; it increases our own self-insight and at the same time deepens our sensitivity and understanding of others. This has a therapeutic value, it can have a cleansing value, if we are willing to face ourselves honestly, to acknowledge our sins and shortcomings, and to be reconciled to the "Way of truth and life."

Almighty and most merciful God our heavenly Father; we humble ourselves before thee, under a deep sense of our unworthiness and guilt. We have grievously sinned against thee, in thought, in word, and in deed. We have come short of thy glory; we have broken thy commandments, and turned aside every one of us from the way of life. Yet now, O most merciful Father, hear us when we call upon thee with penitent hearts; and for the sake of thy Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy upon us. Pardon our sins; take away our guilt; and grant us thy peace. Purify us, by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, from all inward uncleanness; and make us able and willing to serve thee in newness of life, to the glory of thy holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



by Tom F. DRIVER

**A**LL OVER AMERICA, and in numerous other countries, there is today a lively interest in the performance of drama in churches. This interest has come about for at least five reasons: (1) American society as a whole is paying more attention to all the several art forms, such as music, ballet, painting, architecture, and literature, than it did in the earlier part of its history. (2) A number of the leading dramatists of the time, such as Christopher Fry, T. S. Eliot, and Thornton Wilder, have written religious plays; and other dramatists, such as Eugene O'Neill and Tennessee Williams, have expressed latent, if not overt, religious themes in their plays. (3) The church has recently become more aware of its historical heritage than it was for a time, with the result that the historical connections between the church and drama have been rediscovered. (4) Emphasis upon the church's heritage has brought a revival of interest in worship, with a recognition of the connections there are between appreciation of worship and appreciation of the dramatic. (5) Christian educators have found that the experience of writing, producing, and performing in plays has much value for the development of one's religious life.

Because of these facts, interest in drama for the church has grown so rapidly that it is hard for the younger generation to realize how great was the opposition of many church people to all things theatrical a generation ago. The task that today faces those who work in religious drama is not to overcome resistance to the idea of drama in the church, but rather to think more clearly about what drama is and what it is for, in order that they may work more effectively. It may be useful for me to try to clear away some erroneous ideas often encountered about what drama is. I can do this best by indicating some things that the drama is *not*. Drama is not preaching, and is not a substitute for preaching. Drama is not a means of communication. Drama is not worship.



"Roger Williams and Mary," given at the First Baptist Church in Flint, Michigan.

Bill Gallegher

I believe those statements to be true, and at the same time I believe the following to be true: Though drama is not preaching and is not a substitute for preaching, it is often an indispensable *supplement* to the preaching ministry of the church. Besides, there are many elements of a good sermon that are like a play. Though drama is not a means of communication, and should not be used as if it were, it may be that a play communicates something. Though drama is not worship, there are many similarities between the structure of a play and the form of a worship service, and a play may become an aid to worship.

Each of the foregoing points deserves expansion.

## A play and a sermon

A sermon is like a play in several ways. Like a play, it seeks to establish contact with its audience (congregation) in the shortest possible time and in the most vivid possible way. Like a play, the sermon should shun the abstract and favor the concrete. It wants to contain as much narrative as possible. Whatever it has to say should find its validation in actual situations that have occurred in history or that occur in the lives

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Drama Critic for *The Christian Century*

of human beings in the actual world. Like a play, the sermon should begin with one point, introduce a second one that presents a challenge to it, work through the conflict, and emerge in a resolution. It should manifest skill raised to the level of artistry. In all these ways a good sermon is like a play.

And yet a sermon is not a play. Obviously. A sermon is a talk given by one man, whereas a play is a story enacted by several persons. Yet this is not the most fundamental difference. The basic distinction between a sermon and a play is that a play makes-believe while a sermon is for real.

A sermon is a means of communication. A sermon is worship, or at least an integral part of worship. And it can be these because it is, ought to be, straightforward. When a man preaches to me, I want to know that what he is saying is clear and that he himself believes it totally. If he does not believe it and has not actually found it to be true in his life and the lives of others, there is no reason why I should listen to him. Anyone can make up something about religion. Men have been inventing religions of one kind or another since the world began, and they have always been pretty good as entertainments. They have lasted until history presented them with realities they could not come to terms with. The sermon is spoken by a real man to real people about things that are real.

A play is different. The beautiful Christian plays of the Middle Ages are all anonymous, and we are none the worse for not knowing who the authors were. One might prove that Shakespeare was insane, but that would not make *King Lear* any less a masterpiece. I would go to see a new play by a madman perhaps, but I would not go to hear a madman preach. The preacher is a part of his sermon in a way that a playwright is not a part of his play.

Moreover, a play may be written about things that never really were, in a world that never really was. Caligula



an was entirely made up by Shakespeare, and the island where *The Tempest* takes place is not in any known ocean. The things that happen in the play will never be seen by anyone outside the theater. Yet it is a great play and not without its importance for one who would understand the Christian religion.

The point is that a play, being fiction (even if, as in some cases, it is fictionalized history), appeals primarily to the *imagination*. When we watch a play, as Samuel Taylor Coleridge said, we willingly suspend our disbelief. If the author makes his imaginary situation consistent enough and establishes the initial contact with us firmly enough, we pretend that what is not so is so. In hearing the sermon, we do not suspend disbelief; and we do not, or should not, pretend.

If playing is make-believe, one may ask what is the use of a play in matters affecting religion. The answer is that the Christian gospel is something very strange to people who live in the modern world—the world of jet air travel, television commercials, and psychiatrists' offices—and even to begin to comprehend what Christianity is all about requires an act of imagination. The *validation* of Christianity is not a work of the imagination, but the *first seeing* of it is. And not only the first seeing, but the continual return that every Christian makes to the first principles of the faith.

A minister told me of talking with one of his parishioners, a businessman, about a musical he had seen in New York called *Finian's Rainbow*. The businessman was not impressed. His face was stern, and when he got a chance he said scornfully, "That play

is a fantasy, isn't it?" It was as if the word "fantasy" were enough to condemn it forever. The minister said to me, "When he said that, I wondered how I would ever be able to talk to him about the Holy Spirit." Plays are today often indispensable supplements to the preaching ministry of the church because they stimulate the imagination of their audiences and thus open up areas of thought and feeling to which the preacher may then appeal when he speaks straight from the shoulder in his sermon. Minds that are not imaginative are stony ground for the seed of the gospel.

### A play and communication

The fact that a play appeals to and stimulates the imagination also explains why it is not a means of communication. Communication means getting something across. What happens when one sees a play is not primarily that something gets across to him but that he himself comes across and joins in the experience of the play. A play is therefore more like communion (in the generic sense of the term, not the specifically religious sense) than like communication. It is a sharing of experience. The play succeeds if this happens, whether or not the audience "gets the message." Persons should go to see a play not to be instructed or to receive "messages," but rather to enter into an experience. What they make of the experience intellectually may take them a lifetime to fathom. No one has yet succeeded in saying what the "message" of *Hamlet* is. It is all the better play for that. As a means of communica-

tion it is poor, but as an occasion for communion it is inexhaustible.

This does not mean that one may not leave a play and say, "I got such and such out of it." On the other hand, it is likely that his partner will say, "No, you are wrong, for I thought it meant so and so." Then the conversation is started, and the value of the play resides in the fact that both of them are now forced in their individual ways to respond to a common experience.

### A play and worship

A play appeals primarily to the imagination, and this is the reason that it cannot be worship. For worship, like the sermon which is a part of worship, is for real and not for pretend. It is true that there is something dramatic about worship. In worship certain people come together and go through certain *acts* which are prescribed for them. In worship there is dialogue. There is conflict, too, one of the most fundamental characteristics of drama. Yet the dialogue and the conflict in worship are not for show. They are the encounter between the worshipers and God: the people on the one hand and their Creator, Judge, Redeemer, on the other.

The "drama" of worship is one in which there is no audience, for all are or should be participants in the action and dialogue that are going on. All present are priests, and everyone is confronted by and makes his act of response to God.

Thus, while it is true that there is something dramatic about worship, it

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A scene from "Cain," by Howard Nemerov, given at Union Theological Seminary in New York, by students in the Program of Religious Drama. The Director of the department is Robert Seaver.



by Mary A. TULLY

Assistant Professor of Religious  
Education and Psychology, Union  
Theological Seminary, New York

## WHY USE DRAMA IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION?



A scene from "The Bloody Tenet," about Roger Williams, by James Schevill, produced by the Central Congregational Church, Providence, Rhode Island. The play was commissioned jointly by the church and the Department of Worship and the Arts, N.C.

EVERY CHRISTIAN EDUCATOR<sup>1</sup> faces a dilemma. On the one hand he is called to guide the opening up and the developing of the selfhood of the learner, and on the other hand he is responsible for setting the conditions in which the revelation of the selfhood of God is possible. This dual concern may cause him to desire a *technique* which will provide an immediate solution to this conflict. He knows that an event dramatically presented motivates people and illumines a message in a way no lecture or discussion can. But he does not know what plays to use, he is not trained to direct them, he is not prepared to lead the group in spontaneous dramatic activity, and he feels he cannot afford the time and effort.

But actually these concerns are secondary, for in a cooperative enterprise between dramatist and educator some basic questions must be asked first. Why do we use drama in education? How do we guide people toward drama? What happens in the religious development of a person during dramatic involvement? Is there a right time for dramatic procedures? When should creative activity arise spontaneously, independent of a script? The first set of concerns springs out of one meaning of the word "drama," and the second relates to another. The several connotations of this word often cause confusion in Christian education.

### Drama: a group activity

"Drama" can refer to a program or procedure selected by the educator to be part of a group's activity at a particular time for a particular reason. Thus we think

<sup>1</sup>The educator is defined as anyone who has responsibility for teaching, leading, or directing persons who come to church to learn the Christian faith. The learners may be of any age, from preschool children to elderly people.

<sup>2</sup>The term "dramatist" is used here for the drama consultant, the director, the playwright, or the specialist in creative or informal dramatics—each of whom has a highly specialized task. However, the purpose of this article may be served by using an over-all term.

of drama as a technique or method, something the educator chooses "to do" with his group. The activity may be classified either as formal or informal dramatics.

In formal dramatics an educator incorporates a prepared script into the life of a group or invites a dramatist<sup>2</sup> to direct a performance according to a script. The chief purpose is to discover the intention of the author and to interpret it with imagination and clarity to the observers. The director of the play is not concerned with the actors as persons but as *dramatis personae*.

Informal dramatics includes a wide range of procedures such as creative play, creative dramatics, role playing, sociodrama, rhythmic movement, pantomime, puppetry, choral speech, and informal uses of formal scripts. The activity is primarily aimed at deepening, enriching, and clarifying the experience of members of the group. Using approaches common to formal dramatics but not insisting upon perfection of detail, the educator seeks to release the human personality.

### Drama: an inner process

But "drama" in Christian education has a second connotation. It refers to that aspect of the search for a deeper level of existence where God's will and human will confront each other and struggle for form and content. This gives us a more important reason for considering drama in the church.

Drama is more than an outer activity. What we see on the stage and what we observe in children's behavior in an informal dramatic situation are externalized forms of an inner process. Underneath the outward setting in a *truly creative* activity, a process is going on in which God may be very much a part.

In formal dramatics the educator or dramatist selects the script. In identifying with part or all of this script the learner is afforded the possibility of changing his inner environment and development. This identification and possible development take place not because the educator or dramatist "spells it out" to the participant but *because the participant responds*. This inner r



These moves in obedience to certain laws which are important to the development of a dramatized character as to the life situation which drama reflects. When educator, the dramatist, and the participant meet and seek together to explore with humility and preparedness the potentialities held in the script, then an opportunity arises where God's Spirit may move across the edge of the waters of the human spirit and order may come out of chaos. In this case we may say that the play "speaks to" the condition of the person. The external form coincides with the inner condition. This is the reason that we often refer to the gospel as "the drama of our redemption"—God acted out his purpose, and we identify with it.

In informal dramatics the individual and the group use their own words and actions. The resulting outer activity reveals the inner process. Thus in formal and informal dramatics we could speak of *forwarding the inner drama* as contrasted to the connotation of "drama" which points to the play itself or to the technique of acting out.

The implication of this complexity is seen when one asks when, where, and with whom the educator should move into dramatic activity. The answer is difficult, for it depends on the questioning in the life of the group. Part of the answer will always lie in the mystery of God. There are outward signs, however, which the educator can sense. A need for drama is indicated at times when a group needs to consolidate its learnings, clarify a situation, witness to its life or message, establish a point of commitment, or bring solidarity and focus to its life.

### Choice of approach

In general, creative or informal dramatics is the most fruitful procedure with children. Most *scripts* are written for adults or by adults who are no longer in creative touch with childhood. The educator knows that the only speech which leads a child further in his awakening process is either his own speech or the authentic (unedited) speech of another child.

The creative approach applies to the elderly as well. With imagination an educator could develop a program in informal dramatics highly beneficial for the aged, who have a great store of memories to be tapped.

With youth and adults, formal dramatics comes into its own. Nothing else calls forth from those in the prime of life the *best* of their minds, feelings, skills, and bodily disciplines.

### The roles of educator and dramatist

The educator and dramatist bring individual personalities and interpretations to the enterprise of drama in the church. At a depth-dimension traditionally their roles have been separated and unrelated. When they are brought together each approaches the project from a specialized, limited point of view. Yet if drama is to be important in Christian education, they must work together closely.

Both educator and dramatist have a purpose common to every leader in the church. This purpose has two sides, one having to do with the inner life of the individual—commitment and dedication of life; the other with his portraying a message—witnessing. To state it as a question: What does it mean to be Christian, and what does it mean to carry the marks of Jesus Christ, the message incarnated in us, to the world? Answers to this dual question must be sought by both dramatist and educator, for the world today demands a deeper commitment and a more powerful witness than preceding generations have demanded. No educator or drama-

tist, or indeed any leader, can fulfill this purpose alone. But there is a third person involved—the individual being educated. His role is that of responding—committing himself at whatever point he is, and witnessing to that point.

The dramatic event (whether through formal script or spontaneous activity) is a single facet of the great drama of man in life, God in life, and man and God in life together. The dramatist's role is to focus upon this picture, to train people to be part of the picture, and to make it so alive that it is etched indelibly on the minds and hearts of the learners. The sensitive educator has always used drama whether or not he called it by name, for dramatic procedures are integral to good teaching. Learning at its deepest level is wrought through symbolic form, and the use of the arts aids in this process. In witnessing to the faith, therefore, the educator becomes a dramatist, and the dramatist an educator.

The Scriptures contain concepts which cannot be grasped merely by abstract talk. How does a person learn the *meaning* of love, forgiveness, or suffering? One cannot talk about these *words* until he has felt their meanings. To appropriate the meanings, the learner must first see them made concrete in dramatic, symbolic, or actual form through persons or events with which he can identify. Then he may be able to consent to the meanings and act them out either vicariously or directly. To guide this process the educator must have a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures and the learning processes as well as a sensitivity to the specialized knowledge that the dramatist offers.

Several types of working relationships are possible for the educator and dramatist. For example, a director of Christian education may call a dramatist as consultant to discuss dramatic procedures with leaders in the church and train them in this discipline. Or, a leader of a group may even turn the group over to a dramatist for work on a specific unit, in which case the educator will have prepared the group for the venture, be a close observer of the process, and be ready for the follow-up. It is quite possible that the Christian educator could at the same time be a trained dramatist. If so, he will need to define his purpose and procedure in each case.

### Categories to guide the educator

The following categories may serve as a basis of (1) selecting plays, (2) selecting material for creative or informal dramatics, and (3) guiding the development of individuals or groups.

#### TYPE A. ILLUMINATING THE PRESENT LIVING SITUATIONS OF PERSONS

*Education into reality*      Flashes of events at home, school, church, work, community.

*Purpose:* To open up, clarify, and throw into perspective the situation in which the group or individual is living. This process is a basic ingredient in decision-making. An individual does not make choices in a vacuum or in the abstract. Educators must train person to make *real* decisions in *real, living* situations. Through seeing all facets of a situation, an individual begins to be responsive and to develop a sense of responsibility.

*Example: Guidance Through Drama*, Weiss. Six plays about common family-child-school problems.

#### TYPE B. EXPOSING THE POLARITIES IN LIFE

*Education into understanding*      The conflict and tension resulting from good and evil, life and death, freedom and authority, joy and tragedy, health and illness, strength and weakness, perfection and imperfection.



**Purpose:** To help modern man realize and understand the sources of his tension. The polarities reveal the depth and seriousness of life and subsequently the complexity of making decisions. This type of drama objectifies the tensions created by the polarities, tensions which cause an individual to cling to and possibly idolize persons and things. In this way the educator tries to train against this idolatry.

**Example:** The earlier grades would explore through creative dramatics these "opposites" as they are housed in fantasy tales and legends. For youth and adults: Shaw, *Androcles and the Lion*; Coxé and Chapman, *Billy Budd*.

#### TYPE C. PORTRAYING THE CONTENT OF OUR TRADITION AND FAITH

**Education into information** Stories, events, and situations from history, from biblical materials, and from the liturgy and worship of the church.

**Purpose:** To inform people in a way that will give them a sense of the continuity of the faith and help them feel part of the ongoing Christian community.

**Example:** Formal scripts: *The Sign of Jonah*, *The York Cycle*, *The Bloody Tenet*, *The Crucible*. Informal activity for children: acting out stories and events based on church school lessons.

#### TYPE D. REVEALING THE DYNAMICS OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

**Education into emotional health** Dramatic events showing rebellion, love, hate, regression, aggression, submission, fear, pride.

**Purpose:** To help learners identify an emotion and therefore be better able to understand and handle it. Learners thus begin to understand and act upon the great teachings of the church—forgiveness, *agape* love, atonement, redemption—rather than upon the standards of the secular world—success, failure, power, prestige.

**Example:** Plays by the New York State Mental Hygiene Committee, produced by the American Theatre Wing; Williams, *The Glass Menagerie*. For creative drama, teachers may use the situations in the life of the group which touch on the content of relationships.

#### TYPE E. INVOLVING PARTICIPATION IN THE MYSTERY OF LIFE

**Education into reverence** Plays pointing toward the mystery of the Holy, the Other, the transcendental elements in life, materials and areas of experience beyond our reason and understanding but with which we can identify. The space age makes education into reverence imperative.

**Purpose:** To lead learners to be unafraid of the unknown and to have feelings of faith and awe; to encourage them to act upon these feelings and not always on reason; to lay a basis for worship.

**Example:** *The Night of the Auk*; *For the Time Being*. The modern world affords the teacher abundant oppor-

tunity to anticipate in dramatic play the excitement of an ever-changing universe, and in such play to discover faith, awe, and mystery.

#### TYPE F. PROVIDING SUGGESTIONS (AND SKILLS) IN ACTION

**Education into action** Scripts or activities which give persons an opportunity to try out in a protected situation differing modes of behavior.

**Purpose:** Initially, to sharpen learner's ability for projection and identification. To let learners "try on" alternative ways of acting, an experience which lessens trial-and-error actions which might be hurtful or perhaps even destructive to fearful persons. This could provide a training ground for persons going into community service projects for the church.

**Examples:** Books on role-playing, sociodrama materials.

Although the categories may overlap, each emphasizes an ever-present element in nurture and witness. A dramatic event when performed may serve several purposes, depending upon the responses of the participants and observers. These responses are valuable data for the educator to use in the guidance process. Even a negative response indicates a stage of development. Each category demands just as much knowledge, discipline, hard work, and seriousness as the others. All these types may be used with groups of all ages. The sample listed under each type is not intended to be a "standard"; the categories themselves are suggestions.

The educator must choose both subject and dramatic form in terms of a specific group. Timing, preparation and follow-up are important considerations. Preparation includes raising issues, undertaking research, and defining and focusing attitudes. Follow-up consists of skillful questions, noncoercive and free exchange of ideas, and times of leisure and quiet in which persons can assimilate ideas and respond to them. *The process must be held in its totality.*

We must not become enslaved by these categories or suggestions, valuable as they are. Commitment and witness should be a living quality, depending on the aliveness in the form and discipline of the dramatist; on the aliveness of the educator in placing the dramatic event in a setting for interpretation; and on the aliveness of the response of the individual. But greater than these human roles is the fact that God is at work in history with a plan for human life. We stand in awe and reverence, realizing that the point of our witness and commitment is only a single foothold in a journey toward God. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; the beginning and the ending. This is the drama of God and man in life.

#### Plays Referred to:

*Androcles and the Lion*, by George Bernard Shaw. Samuel French, 25 W. 45th St., New York 36, N. Y.

*Billy Budd*, by Coxé and Chapman. Dramatists Play Service, 14 E. 38th St., New York 36, N. Y.

*The Sign of Jonah*, by Guenter Rutenborn. Thomas Nelson & Sons, New York.

*The Bloody Tenet*, by James Schevill. In *Religious Drama*, (Revised Edition), Meridian Books, 12 E. 22nd St., New York 10, N. Y.

*The Crucible*, by Arthur Miller. Dramatists Play Service.

*The Glass Menagerie*, by Tennessee Williams. Dramatists Play Service.

*For the Time Being*, by W. H. Auden. *Religious Drama*, *The Night of the Auk*, by Arch Obler. Samuel French.

Plays by the National Committee on Mental Hygiene, ordered through the National Association for Mental Health, 10 Columbus Circle, New York 19, N. Y.

### 13th Annual Religious Drama Workshop

At Lake Forest College, near Chicago, Illinois, July 22-29, 1961. Sponsored by the Committee on Religious Drama, National Council of Churches.

Groups on creative drama and creative movement, informal drama, acting, directing, production; groups for advanced students and leaders.

Leaders: Amy G. Loomis, Alfred Edyvean, James Carlson, Argyle Knight, Zula Pearson, Blaine Fister, and others.



ence from "Everyman Today," given by students in the Program of Religious Drama at Union Theological Seminary.

*Presbyterian Life Photo*

IN OUR DISCUSSION of how the church might effectively use the theater, we sometimes forget that we are not always talking about the use of a play. To be sure, there are some instances in which the play is *not* the thing. Impromptu theater and extemporaneous dramatizations of various kinds (creative drama for children, role-playing for adults, etc.) avoid the use of previously prepared dramatic scripts. Dance and mime provide a special theater confined to movement. But for good or bad, the central event in the contemporary theater of the western world is the presentation of a play.

We argue about what the proper liturgical use of the theater is and sometimes ignore the fact that there are relatively few ancient and almost no modern plays that have been written with liturgical conditions in mind. We look for a theater that will set forth a discussion of religious problems and forget that a play is not a debate and sometimes not even the occasion for one. We want a theater which will provide recreation and catharsis for the troubled spirits who work in it and overlook the tensions and frustrations that frequently develop in the course of play production. The accepted job for theater is to produce a play for an audience, and often it performs the tasks of argumentation, persuasion, discussion, therapy, or worship quite awkwardly.

The play, like any work of art, needs first to be true to itself. Its production may serve extra-artistic purposes only after it has first served its own contained integrity. The play, in the church as in the secular theater, is the focal point of the dramatic presentation. To grasp this fact is important if we are to build a theater with significant religious dimensions.

We start then with an enterprise that is built about the unified work of an artist, the playwright; the demands of his work provide significant sides to the major tasks of theatrical production. Some implications of this assertion apropos a theater for the church may be profitably reviewed.

### Worship, liturgy, and the play

We must recognize some of the tensions and apparent conflicts between worship and the play as a



## FORMAL DRAMA IN THE CHURCH

# The play's the thing

by James R. CARLSON

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specific artistic work. Insofar as general objectives are concerned it is not difficult to reconcile dramatic presentation with the church's perspective in regard to worship and liturgy. If worship is to include all that is done in praise of God and if it is to encompass the acts of confession, contrition, and supplication as well as of praise and thanksgiving, there would certainly be room for the intensification of these acts which a play makes possible. If the liturgy at its best, in the words of Simon Phipps, is a "presentation of a coherent community in an incoherent society," one can see the need for the vividness which drama can add to that presentation.

But when one introduces drama into the worship of a specific parish and places it alongside particular liturgical acts, tensions and conflicts appear. It would seem that some of the tensions are appropriate and should be fostered; others need to be resolved.

Inevitably the worship of God in the midst of the secular community produces conflict. The disintegration and incoherence of our society is in radical opposition to the gospel, and this opposition cannot be left out of the acts of worship. It is perhaps the devil who complains when drama makes the congregation uneasy, or who objects to the play which upsets complacent routine or disturbs sentimental beauty. If the price of producing drama in the church is to make drama safe and inoffensive—to prevent its being true to itself—then the price is too high. The playwright with integrity will seek to express his view of reality even at the price of ugliness. His artistic act, along with the liturgical act, is not concerned with flattering beliefs or with soothing the feelings of even the conscientious and pious.

But there is another aspect of tension between liturgy and drama which ought to be resolved. Like the play the liturgy has its own specific con-



tent within a shape of its own. Its historical lineage and its essential message have produced a structure analogous to the artistic structure of the drama. A drama with a form that destroys this unity or a literary quality which vulgarizes it has no place in a liturgical framework. The medieval plays, though sometimes used as "tropes" within the framework of the Mass, were mostly written for production outside the church building and with no conscious effort to make them harmonize with the liturgy.

The fact that certain contemporary plays have plots set within a church or cathedral does not necessarily make them "liturgical" plays (*Murder in the Cathedral; A Sleep of Prisoners, The Zeal of Thy House*). There are other plays more closely related to liturgical worship by reason of their structure and rhythm as well as their subject matter and setting (some of the works of R. H. Ward, Henri Ghéon, and others). Conscientious play producers will be the first to admit that by tradition the liturgy in a particular Christian community may be crystallized in a form which cannot permit the inclusion of the play, at least not the plays now available.

Whenever a play is to be presented in connection with traditional forms of worship it would perhaps be well to see that the play is "framed" by appropriate divisions, that the various acts of worship (including the play) not be allowed to muddle, cloud, or deform the integral forms of each other. Drama done in the church is surely a part of worship, but to recognize the integrity of its form suggests that it can be combined with other forms of worship only on terms which respect the integrity of each.

### A place for the play

The problems cited above should not be taken to mean that the presentation of a play in the sanctuary—the liturgical room—is necessarily inappropriate. It may be, if the liturgical practices and arrangements make such productions awkward; but frequently the forms of worship and the construction and furnishings of the chancel make the sanctuary a perfectly suited and practical place for play production.

Certain general considerations of its use should be kept in mind. It is doubtful that the over-all arrangement or character of the sanctuary should be altered in any drastic manner even if tradition would per-

mit. Use of scenery in the usual theatrical sense would seem to be inappropriate. Platforms can be used inconspicuously to augment available playing areas and to provide the height necessary for effective vision. The addition of a playing rostrum simply and directly might be a good solution for practical purposes and also for symbolizing the direct and undisguised offer of a play before the altar and to the glory of God. In Spain, where one of the oldest liturgical plays is given in the church at Elché, a simple platform is placed at the transept of the church in front of the altar, where the play is presented boldly and directly and where the actors can be seen and heard easily.

The time may come when church architecture will contain in its basic design provisions for the play. This was sometimes the case in medieval churches at the time when the play was most fully integrated into the life of the church. At present we can agree that any additions to the sanctuary should be simple, tasteful, and unobtrusive. The use of modern theatrical lighting equipment is perhaps the most effective single adjunct to the staging of drama in the sanctuary.

The admonition toward simplicity and directness would seem also to be the best guide for presenting the play elsewhere in the church building. Few churches have adequate conventional stages, and a good deal of ingenuity and good taste must be spent on the improvisations that are made. The growing practice of using flexible staging in the secular theater provides valuable models for church production ("in the round," "arena style," "three-quarter round," etc.). Most of them, however, require a direct break from the kind of pictorial and decorative scenery which has dominated the theater during most of the present century. The need for such a clear break is sometimes hard for beginning producers to grasp. The notions that scenery starts with a set of flats, that a proscenium arch and curtains are indispensable, and that the stage must provide a complete physical illusion need to be given up. When we come to recognize the creative powers of the mind's eye and confine our scenic contributions to those things which stimulate the imagination—or only to those things which do not confine it—we will discover staging methods which are effective and are available at minimum cost.

This same attitude suggests an approach to the creation of costumes and the other visual parts of the production. Illusion is often destroyed by tawdry imitation and decorative efforts to build armor of papier mâché, to disguise flannel as velvet or to create ermine out of cotton wool. Often hamper the active imagination and certainly add little to pictorial effectiveness. Costumes that suggest the line, the texture, or the feeling of the garment which the script prescribes may miss the mark of authenticity but at the same time allow the play itself to emerge.

### Production disciplines from the play

Thorough study of a play should precede its production. We do not "do" a play by starting the cast reciting the dialogue of the first scene and proceeding in a straight line to the last. The study and preparation that must be given a script as the foundation for production provides an understanding of and feeling for theme, plot, character, and other aspects of the play that are to be translated into a specific production. Serious philosophical and theological discussions of the play are appropriate; however, one needs to remember that these discussions are not the flesh and blood of the play—a play is a play because it is an action and not a discussion. But all available aids to understanding should be employed in order that the final formulation of the play by acting, setting, and attending may have as clear and rich a base as possible.

Out of such study emerges a "production design" that includes all elements of production. It includes the traditional prompt book that diagrams the movement of the play and notes other details of interpretation. The prompt book as well as all other plans for production should be based upon a deep understanding of the images, the concepts, and the rhythms that make up the life of the play.

No rules for this kind of preparation will be found in the standard works on direction; the "production

Pictures on page opposite:

Left: Character in "The Deluge," by Ernst Barlach, given by the Liturgical Arts Guild, Kent, Ohio.

Top: Cast of "Christ in the Concrete City," by Philip Turner, presented by the College of Wooster in the sanctuary of Westminster Church, Dayton, Ohio.

Bottom: Hamline University's production of "It Should Happen to a Dog," by Wolf Mankowitz.

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ign" grows out of a complete immersion in the play itself. This is to say that the producer or director should neglect the technical assistance and stimulation to the imagination that come from the experience of other producers and that be distilled in an increasingly valuable library on play production; it is only to suggest that the most important path to the production of the play is through the understanding of play itself.

Having established this understanding of, and feeling for, the play and having created in the mind—and perhaps on paper—a production design, it is ready to build the production. The rehearsal period is the time for construction; it should be long

enough and serious enough to allow the play to emerge clearly and completely. Here the special magic of group creativity comes to life, and one needs to recognize it and give oneself freely to it. If production objectives based on thorough understanding have been established, the director and cast can safely abandon themselves to the development of a kind of play within the play. Matters of detail can for a time be safely put aside; there comes a time for improvisation, for abandoning the letter of the script for the spirit of the play. As the production grows there will be times when one refers back to the script; the spirited interpretations by all the creative makers of the play will be checked against the authority

of the play. But the life of the play finally exceeds preconceived understandings as it is released and set forth to "catch the conscience of the king."

### Some Books for the Director

Albright, Halstead, and Mitchell, *Principles of Theatre Art*, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1955.

Bentley, Eric, *The Playwright as Thinker*, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1946.

Cole and Chinoy, editors, *Actors on Acting*, Crown Publishers, 1949; *Directing the Play*, Bobbs-Merrill, 1953.

Fergusson, *The Idea of a Theatre*, Princeton University Press, 1952.

Gassner: *Producing the Play*, Dryden Press, 1952.

(A bibliography on production and publishers' addresses are given in *Plays for the Church*. See footnote, page 21.)





# DRAMA FOR LARGE MEETINGS

by ALFRED R. EDYVEAN

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**L**ET'S HAVE A DRAMA!" This is the eager cry of many committees as they sit down to plan programs for conferences, conventions, and large denominational meetings throughout the country. Many groups include drama today as an important contribution to their meetings. It is likely that this enthusiasm for dramatic productions will continue and will result in more effective and inspirational drama for the mass audience. The following suggestions may serve as a guide to those who find it possible to include such drama in their planning. It is imperative that a committee planning for a large dramatic production secure a competent director-producer and technical director who will be in on the planning from the beginning.

## The dramatic material

Dramas for mass meetings (ranging from 1,000 to 25,000 people) may be divided into two categories. First, the committee may desire the presentation of an existing drama—one fairly well known to them. Such plays as *The Sign of Jonah* by G. Rutenborn, *The Way of the Cross* by H. Gheon, or *Christ in the Concrete City* by P. W. Turner would fall into this category. With an existing dramatic work the task is one of adapting, editing, and then apprehending the problems. This is, however, the simpler of the two choices.

Secondly, the committee may want to have a drama written especially for the occasion and the particular situation; in this instance the production is more complex. The major concern is always the quality of the written material. While the above-mentioned dramas have proved themselves, at least to a majority of audiences, the new drama must both sell itself as a dramatic vehicle in an unnatural situation as well as attain the goals established by the committee; this is not always easy. Hence, the first observation is that the writer of the drama must have the ability to create dramatic material, and particularly for a large audience.

Often in planning for a large audi-

ence the committee is overly explicit as to the contents of the drama. (It must contain "several axes that the committee wishes to grind.") The writer of the convention drama then has a difficult task. He might be asked to include certain materials which make dramatic structure not only questionable but practically impossible. Hence, the major concern again is the quality of the written material. Does the writer have the ability to create an original piece for the occasion? This is a job for a professional writer. Even the most skilled craftsman of the theater always has to do some rewriting; the amateur often has to do a complete job of editing. Drama for the conference or convention must be well written by a competent dramatist, keeping the limitations of the situation constantly in mind. Extensive research is often required in securing background material.

## The physical situation

Often in a large convention hall or arena there are limited stage facilities. These halls or auditoriums are erected to house all types of entertainment from ice shows to wrestling matches, and may seat from 8,000 to 25,000 people. The stage is made up of a number of platforms or "table-tops" placed together in a temporary fashion at one end of the hall without backdrops or traveling curtains.<sup>1</sup> There are generally no front or back curtains or usable drapes, beyond the eight-foot drapes used in exhibition booths. Distance may present a problem for a large segment of the audience; for them the actors will be minute figures.

Distance and size of the stage demands some creative blocking on the part of the director in placing his people well in such special surroundings. In producing *Christ in the Concrete City* at the Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Denver, the play,

which has only six actors, had to be completely reblocked for a mass audience, with large movements and exaggerated gestures. One could well imagine that the ideal location for drama in a non-proscenium setting would be the exact center of the floor itself, which would produce a huge theater-in-the-round. Such an arrangement would require seating adjustments in the auditorium.

## Scenery, lighting, and audio

With regard to scenery, flats in most instances need to be extremely high to have any balance in large auditoriums. However, this tends to dwarf or distort the actors. Because there are certain union considerations about the use of flats, managers of most halls deliberately do not save them. Partial or fragmentary settings may be used, but these need to be a certain size to balance the rest of the stage and space. Properties not provided at the hall can often be trucked in from the outside, donated by a department store, or brought in by a local committee.

The most staple item furnished by the hall management is the platforms or levels to be had at every large coliseum. With creative imagination the director may build various levels on the stage itself, and with a few essential pieces of scenery and/or furniture he may have a very workable unit. In this way he can achieve height, depth, and breadth for the production. One creates more headaches than necessary by insisting that a complete modern or period living room set be created in detail on such a stage.

Lighting is one of the most important elements in convention drama. One must have actors on some kind of raised platforms, and the stage must be well lighted. The intense lighting one can produce with the strong arc lights of a large hall compensates somewhat for the great distance between actor and audience. Such intense lighting sharpens the focus on the actors. In most situations lighting is the only curtain. One must depend on the carbon arc lights

<sup>1</sup>A notable exception is the Kiel Auditorium in St. Louis, where a double proscenium arch has been constructed.





"The Circle Beyond Fear," by Darius Leander Swann, presented by the Seminary Players at the Kentucky State Fair and Ex-

position Center in Louisville. The hall, seating 18,000, made it necessary to use both microphones and arc lights.

sometimes called "follow-spots") are high in the ceiling for all transitions from scene to scene, as they fade to black and come up on another center of interest. Such lights are mounted on permanent platforms high up to the side of the house. Each light requires its own operator (a woman man). Most houses have as many as ten or twelve such lights, and in this kind of specialized projection the director can get by with one or four. Each light has an iris which may be opened or closed in operation. It acts like a simple dimmer system. (Sometimes these lights have their own dimmer system, but the iris will do the trick.) Each light has five or six color frames which may be thrown up quickly for rapid operation.<sup>2</sup>

Voice projection in mass-audience situations presents a special problem. As a rough estimate one could say that six actors covering a fairly large set will need at least six microphones. (Neck-mikes or lavaliers are very impractical. Sooner or later the actor will hang himself or trip over the wires, not to mention the constant noise of the microphone rubbing against the costume or of the actor's breathing.) The microphones must be placed strategically to pick

up the "dead spots" on the stage. They need to be correctly positioned to avoid feedback and to assure effective pickup while the actors are in motion. The actors can be trained to "play the mikes" as much as possible.

The director needs to determine how many microphones should be used, and how many channels the audio man can provide, remembering that two or three microphones will already be assigned to the platform for speakers and soloist. Often one can rent outside equipment, which is expensive but very adequate. (This is usually an annoyance to the stage crew.)

Unfortunately, there are few guarantees of the effectiveness of the loud-speakers in huge auditoriums. Regardless of the reputation of the halls, most of them have dead air pockets where the sound does not penetrate effectively. It is important in a large-scale production for the director, or someone appointed by him, to direct the actual production from a vantage point out in the house where he can look down on the entire production. This necessitates an effective intercom system whereby he can talk simultaneously with the light men, stage manager, electrician, and audio man.

### Production-direction

The director must be aware that in any situation the use of each light operator beyond the basic stage crew of one to six may add expense. He must consult with the stage foreman as to which "go with the house" and which men will increase the cost.

All but one of the writer's experiences have been in dramas presented in cities far from home base. In long-distance situations the first step

in the director's preparation is correspondence and visits to the scene of the production. He will need to appoint a local director who knows something about the theater business to head up a local committee to aid in all aspects of the production. If an original drama is to be presented, it is advantageous for the local group or a nearby drama group to make up the cast. Prior to the week of the performance, the director must have appraised the physical and technical limitations of the auditorium. He must either visit and talk personally with the stage foreman or have this done by a reliable assistant. He needs to meet with the local group to assist in casting and conducting a preliminary rehearsal. When he arrives a day or so before the performance, he ought to plan for a dry-run rehearsal in a nearby church or a large hall.

A word should be said here about the problem of scheduling rehearsals in this kind of situation. Conferences always use the main hall or coliseum floor for all the day and evening meetings; hence rehearsals must be scheduled during mealtimes or after hours—from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and after 9:30 p.m. Set-up for a rehearsal takes time, and the stage must be cleared immediately afterwards. One can imagine how much is put off to the last possible moment as far as stage setting is concerned.

After the dry-run rehearsal it is advantageous to schedule a dress rehearsal after hours. (9:30 p.m.) on

*(Continued on page 46)*



# The power of something inward

by James H. WARREN

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FOR TWO AND A HALF HOURS the audience seemed to be unaware that they were not seeing a full performance of *Lost in the Stars*. They were too completely absorbed in the suffering of Kumalo to notice that the actor portraying the role was holding a script. The sought-after moment of "dramatic involvement" was vibrant in the church hall. Maxwell Anderson's adaptation of Alan Paton's *Cry the Beloved Country* communicated the power of universal suffering, of the question of sin, and of one man's Christlike compassion toward his fellow man. The fact that the audience was watching a group of actors in street clothes reading scripts before a neutral background did not really impress them one way or another. The thoughts and feelings of the characters were penetrating the actors' voices and bodies, and the illusion of dramatic truth was realized.

When the last act was over and Kurt Weill's music was lost in space, the silence that gripped the church group was evidence that something had happened and was happening in their inner consciousness. Thoughts were changing, realizations were taking place, motivations were being transformed. The important factor was not the lack of something outward, but the power of something inward. And that is just the power of informal drama.

There are two common misunderstandings about informal drama: first, that it is a panacea for all the headaches of rehearsal time and production budget; second, that it has no artistic merit. Both these misunderstandings stem from a wrong interpretation of the term itself. "In-

formal" does not mean "sloppy," nor does it mean "insignificant." It simply implies a contrast to the more conventional production of a drama.

In a formal or fully prepared production all the resources of dramatic technique are used. The actors memorize their lines and perfect their characterizations through integration of movement with costumes, properties, scenery, lights, sound, and music.

But technical elements are not always necessary. The Greeks and Elizabethans performed under sunlight, and audiences responded enthusiastically. Medieval worshipers felt the impact of liturgical drama without the use of scenery. In Shakespeare's plays the characters briefly mention the place and the time of day and let the audience visualize the setting. Audiences have a tremendous opportunity to use their imaginations, that is, if the script, acting, and direction are effective.

## Simplicity and imagination are keys

The principle on which informal drama is founded can be effectively stated in two words: *simplicity* and *imagination*. Perhaps imagination comes into greatest use in creative dramatics as the actors make their own characterizations, plot, and dialogue. Creative dramatics is used a great deal with children, but the method is not limited solely to them. In former times *commedia dell'arte* actors spontaneously created dialogue day after day before paying audiences. In our day adults "role play" a problem, inventing their own drama as they go along.

Strictly speaking, creative dramatics is not informal dramatics,

though there is some interchange of methods. Informal dramatics is based upon several important principles: (a) The actor interprets from script but does not memorize his lines; (b) There is no extensive use of technical elements (scenery, lights, costumes, make-up, properties). Various types of literature can be adapted to the informal drama technique; Scripture, novels, scenes from novels, short stories, narrative poems, autobiographies, letters, and tragedies are just a few examples.

These three principles place a great deal of faith in an audience's imagination. They also free drama from the necessity of a stage and all the paraphernalia that goes along with it. Drama requiring only the actor's script can be presented under practically any circumstances. It can be performed in a classroom, a church basement, a parlor, a garden, a sanctuary, or any space where there is enough room for actors and audience to come together. Actors can either sit or stand, for the only requirements are that they be easily seen or heard and that the audience be seated comfortably.

Informal drama can enrich the church program in limitless ways. Playreadings can be presented before and after units of study, during family nights, during church school sessions, and as deputation program. Some groups meet regularly to read plays and discuss the meanings. Our church school has organized a club that spends all its sessions in reading and discussing scripts of religious value. Naturally such a program requires careful planning and execution.

## Playreadings may be done many ways

When actors sit or stand and read their scripts without large movements, they are performing what is commonly called a "playreading." Because the actors read from a script, it may seem that little rehearsal time is needed, but this is a false assumption. The amount of rehearsal time varies according to the kind of presentation desired. Playreadings themselves vary in formality. Some are merely sight readings. Others may be professional, such as Charles Laughton's famous production of Shaw's *Don Juan in Hell*. If a group is going to present a reading to an invited audience, that necessarily means more preparation. Generally three or four intensive rehearsals are needed.

Playreadings can be staged simply or complexly. A simple method for the actors to sit or stand in



micircle and read the scripts, re-  
nding freely with body tension and  
ures, but not moving from one  
ition to another. However, a  
pt may be performed in a more  
plex fashion. Actors may stand  
platforms of various heights and  
various positions. They may be  
tlighted or even wear costuming  
t suggests their roles. An in-  
te variety of staging methods can  
devised, but care should be taken  
t the more elaborate presentation  
unified and that it have artistic  
egrity. Whenever technical ele-  
nts are used there is the danger  
transforming a well-planned play-  
ding into a poor, half-realized pro-  
tion. Simplicity and imagination  
in should serve as criteria, since  
y check and balance each other.

f actors read a script but move  
n one position to another, they  
performing a *walking rehearsal*.  
e name fairly accurately describes  
performance—it is as though the  
ience were watching a rehearsal  
hich the actors are running  
ough the action the director has  
t given them. However, they in-  
pret the script as if it were a  
formance. Since they are holding  
pts, they cannot use properties in  
eir hands. Movements must be  
ple, integrated, and expressive. A  
king rehearsal demands about  
e as much preparation as a play-  
ing, but the effort is well worth  
ile since movement adds great  
otional power to a reading.

agination must be a major em-  
sis in informal dramatics. A  
ding without imagination may be  
y and colorless and result in sheer  
ium for the audience. Creative  
matics can be brought into use;  
example, the cast might invent an  
roduction that sets the mood for  
play and also gives necessary in-  
mation about when and where it  
es place. For Channing Pollock's  
e *Captains and Kings*, one group  
d distant drumbeats created by  
muted voices of the actors. As  
drumbeats increased in tempo,  
actors came into position and  
st into their opening lines. This  
ccato, nervous effect created the  
ening tension that the scene de-  
mands and became an excellent sub-  
tute for offstage crowd noises.  
ple, creative ideas that spring  
m the script itself are always ef-  
ective. The closer the introduction  
related to the idea of the play  
elf, the better the final result.

### Literary works may be adapted

In recent years there have been  
w and inventive uses of informal



Mr. Warren leads a workshop in informal dramatics at the July 1960 meeting, Audio-Visual Activities Commission, National Council of Churches of Japan.

dramatics. Groups have staged many literary forms. An autobiography was given a public reading; epic poems like Benet's *John Brown's Body* have been adapted for group reading. There are difficulties involved in all such endeavors, but the principles are simpler than one might imagine. For example, in a biblical parable one reader takes the part of the person telling the story. He reads the necessary description and narrative material with subdued, interpretive power. Individual readers take the lines of each character.

In larger works different characters may be portrayed by one actor who shifts his bodily position and voice to suggest the various personalities represented. Long works may be cut so that the plot and characters develop swiftly toward moments of dramatic intensity. Scenes may be telescoped to make a lengthy work exciting and climactic. A church group used this method to read the book of Mark. At the end of the reading everyone involved felt that he had come to a new understanding of the power and impact of the life of Christ.

Readings of this kind can be transformed into walking rehearsals. Novels, epic poems, short stories, and narrative songs can be given living form as actors perform scenes that originally were meant only for the individual reader. It is exciting to think of the store of material in Scripture and great world literature waiting for such adaptation.

In the Japanese Kabuki theater the narrator has been a central character in many dramas for over two hundred years. He sets the mood, creates tension, clarifies action, expresses inner thoughts, adds dramatic irony, and performs many other duties. The introduction of narration into a plot may not at all weaken the impact of a play but rather add to its complexity and power.

### Audiences may take an active part

A final type of informal drama should be mentioned. Commonly called "discussion drama," it is a device used for discussion and is not to be construed as a method of staging. In its simplest form, the audience

(Continued on page 48)



# Children learn through dramatic activity

by Geraldine B. SIKS

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University of Washington, Seattle

*"Each child must plumb vastness and infinity. Let him call it what he will—fire, water, death, God, worlds, stars. . . . Why should we shorten this probing or cover it up for children?" (C. Madeleine Dixon, *The Power of Dance*<sup>1</sup>)*

**C**HILDREN CREATE. They play. They seek, think, dream, and do. They look for heroes and models by which to live. God has endowed each child with a mysterious, creative, searching soul. But a child needs help in learning how to use his creative desires in a life with purpose.

The use of creative dramatics is one effective way of teaching children and youth about living. This art may be used to introduce a child to the greatest heroes in God's world. It gives children an opportunity to learn about Christian living by creating and interpreting it through a variety of dramatic playings. The children take in impressions, think, discuss, and express themselves through active dramatic play. It is a group art, and each child learns in the presence of others.

## Two illustrative experiences

By looking closely at a branch of apple blossoms, a group of five-year-olds have been guided to wonder about the beauty of God's creation. They have talked about other growing plants and about animals and birds which God has caused to live in the outdoor world. When the mood is strong the teacher suggests: "Today I thought we would recreate a part of God's world. Close your eyes and think of one thing that is most beautiful to you. As soon as you decide

what thing you'll be, you may move out into this space which will be the woods. I will be the wind and will blow a soft wind song. When the wind wakes you up, you may show in your own way how you feel and what you do when you wake up to a new day."

Soon a child moves out into the space and curls up confidently. Other children follow. Some stand tall. Some stoop, crouch, crawl, or stretch out freely. The teacher suggests that the others watch for the first time and play the next time. Then the teacher, as the wind, hums a melody and moves gracefully through the space. Suddenly the woods come alive with beautiful, free, and spontaneous movement. Children, in the spirit of growing things and animals, express their moods with feeling and with their entire selves. The wind calls gently to each one and asks him to tell about himself. Replies come freely: "I'm a daffodil." "I'm the tallest Christmas tree in the whole woods." "I'm a squirrel hunting for nuts." "See, I'm a new bush with my flowers on."

A group of juniors have been guided to wonder about the presence of God in their lives. They have discussed different ways of rejoicing and expressing gladness in being alive. The teacher realizes they are in a strong mood. She invites half the group to hum the melody of "This is the day which the Lord hath made." The others, both boys and girls, are asked to show in pantomime "the one thing you like to do best when you are glad to be alive and have a day in which to be and do." Strong expression comes through. A boy pantomimes swimming. Another plays baseball. One fishes. One bicycles. A girl kneels in prayer. Another walks with great strides and head lifted high. A boy comments, "I asked a blessing and now I'm eating my favorite picnic dinner in the



A young "narrator" in a class dramatics session pretends to be reading from a scroll.

Clark and Clark

woods—drumsticks, corn on the cob, and watermelon!" A girl speaks: "I'm painting a picture with my new water colors. It's Mt. Rainier. I was at our summer place on the island and whenever the mountain looks up over the sound, I know God is everywhere."

## An integral part of learning

Creative dramatics becomes an integral part of learning whenever the teacher uses it to bring a "lesson" within the understanding of children. Not every lesson lends itself to creative dramatics. Some material is better taught through discussion or other activities. The leader must study lesson material to see if it contains opportunities for children to express themselves through action (pantomime), characterization, or dialogue. If the material is dramatic in nature, a teacher then may prepare questions that will cause the children to create and dramatize. Teachers should also study suggestions to determine whether there are opportunities for dramatic experience in songs, stories, verse, and singing games.

To illustrate these principles, let us look at a typical unit for young children, "We Go to Church." The chief purpose is to teach little children that the church is important in pe-

<sup>1</sup>John Day & Co., publisher



s lives. The teacher looks for ways that children might experience the theme through pantomimes, characterizations, or scenes. After careful study she sees the following ways: "This is the way I get ready for church" (children wash, brush hair, comb hair, dress, get offering); "This is the way we go to church" (family groups walk, drive a car, go by bus); "Church is for everyone" (children become a variety of characters stopping work to come to church—a policeman, baseball player, mailman, newsboy, cook, pilot, doctor); "This is church" (children "create" their concept of church—come outside, sing hymns, say prayers, and make offerings; frequently a child volunteers to give a sermon on a specific topic such as "God Is Good," "Being Kind to Others," "Being Good like Jesus," or "The Birthday of Jesus"). For primary children the chief purpose of a unit on the Christmas story is to teach the children that God sent Jesus as a baby to show his great love for the world. This unit is rich in dramatic content. A teacher may present several episodes within the Christmas story or may concentrate on only one or two to emphasize the over-all theme. Scenes rich in dramatic content include the following: Heavenly Scene, in which angels of angels look down on the troubles of the earth and realize that God

needs to send someone to assure them that God loves them and that they must love one another; Shepherd Scene on the hillside; Inn Scene with Mary and Joseph and the innkeepers; the climactic Manger Scene. Along with dramatizing these scenes, children may be guided into further understanding through pantomimes showing "one thing I do to show my love for others at home."

One junior unit has to do with understanding the Bible. Its aim is to help the junior, through a study of God's word, to understand the nature of God and his will. Stories which emphasize the theme "God speaks through the Bible to you" may include episodes from the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Joseph, and dramatic incidents in the life of Moses. All these situations are strong in characterization, conflict, reaction, and dialogue; they cry out for dramatization. As the child goes through the process of dramatizing these stories, he discovers their significance.

For example, when a child discusses the character of Moses with a view toward creating it in dramatic play, he begins to understand the way Moses thought, felt, and acted when he was called by God to prepare himself for leadership. Through questions and discussion a child begins to understand why Moses was at first unwilling, fearful, and reluc-

tant to obey God's will. Thus a child not only understands Moses better but begins to "identify" and understand himself in relation to the situations Moses was in. As children grow in their understanding of Moses they grow likewise in their understanding of courage, faith, and personal responsibility.

### The creative process

The key word in teaching through creative dramatics is *guidance*. Some may wonder why the teacher's guidance is necessary in stimulating creative thinking and dramatic feeling. If a child plays freely on his own, why can't the teacher simply read a story and invite each of the children to choose a part and act it out? Many teachers do this. But as one teacher says, "When we teach this way we get nothing creative from the children. They become noisy, disorganized, and embarrassed. Their playing is plodding and lifeless. Very few children think or feel while they are playing." It is one thing for a child to be creative when he is alone; to think and to create a dramatic incident involving ten, fifteen, or twenty-five persons requires discipline and teamwork.

To give successful guidance a teacher must have an understanding of the creative process. Reduced to its simplest pattern, this process consists of (1) creating a mood, (2) sharing a story or an idea, (3) guiding children to think, feel, and make a plan, and (4) guiding children to play and to evaluate their playing.

*Creating a mood:* Mood lies within an individual; it is thinking affected by feeling. All art is created in the realm of mood, and there must be a common frame of mind before drama can come into being. A teacher strives to help children enter into the specific mood of a story or lesson by asking questions to arouse thinking and feeling.

Unless a mood has been created, dramatic play may have no purpose. If, for example, children are asked to make-believe they are raindrops, they will run and jump vigorously around a room, but without purpose. On the other hand, if the teacher has led them to wonder and think about God's plan of growth in nature, children will express themselves as raindrops with purpose and feeling. Within a mood they will create a beautiful childlike understanding of a divine plan.

*Guiding children to think and plan:* Once children are in a mood, the teacher shares with them a story

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Young children engage naturally in dramatic play, such as dressing up and playing "house." Such play, when guided, can be a good learning experience.

Hays from Monkmeier



# Need a play?

## Write it!

by Ruth Winfield LOVE

Director, Methodist Drama Guild,  
Kent, Ohio

**Editorial note:** *In a local church there often comes a time of special interest—a significant anniversary, an important meeting, a season of the church year—which calls for a large-scale observance. A meaningful way to prepare for such a celebration and to involve many of the members in it is in the creation of an original drama related to the theme of the occasion. This article presents stimulating suggestions for persons working on such an observance.*

**A**N ASSIGNMENT to develop dramatic material celebrating the history of a church will set in motion a fascinating process. It is one that

should have plenty of time for development. A really big event needs at least a year of preparation. Many people can and should be involved in the process, but one person must carry the major responsibility. The committee responsible for the event will choose and support this executive-director-artist.

### Material to be gathered

The first step in the process is to dig up every possible anecdote, incident, trend, and bit of history that has meaning to persons and to the community and that is associated with the life of the church. Studying old records, and interviewing and corresponding with persons who know the

origins first hand are good methods for finding the mass of material that will be required. Some young adults are excellent at doing this kind of information-gathering and report.

The second step is to make a sort of selection from the material corded on cards, in letters, and in the minds of interviewers, and to organize it in dramatic sequence. The classic formula for the drama would be to arrange a chronological telling of a story which would rise to a climax and level off quickly with a confident thrust at the future. More "contemporary" ways of doing it would appeal to some groups: for instance, a telephone answerer in the church office could give continuity to a series of flashbacks, especially if a much-loved church secretary is a part of the story. A more sophisticated and contemporary arrangement would be to build a drama around contrasts—bounces between widely varied episodes. The antiphonal organization will take care of problems in contrast and pacing. Its unity will depend on the centrality of the history of the church; but the total impact will give more "feeling" and be less chronological.

The third step is to explore the dramatic character of incidents that seem most useful. This could be done in at least two ways. A writer could be handed the material from which he would draft the form of the dramatization. Or the creative drama method can be employed. When released and motivated, groups of people will come up with vivid movements, words, and music. They can be trusted to choose the most adequate form for their part of the story. Of course the group

Speaking choirs  
and rhythmic  
movement choirs  
can often  
be used to give  
narration  
or express the  
emotion  
of a scene in  
an original play.  
Rigorous  
rehearsals are  
necessary  
for effective  
results.

Clark and Clark





be made up of persons of the same ages to develop the given incidents. This is a simple process to a person skilled in its use. The director is responsible for keeping these episodes properly balanced, paced, and participated in the finished performance. If a script has been prepared, the director is responsible for rehearsing and performing it. There may, of course, be several persons involved in the production under the executive-director.

#### Basic decisions to be made

The projection of the chosen sequence of incidents brings the director to grips with other basic decisions: What spaces in the church can take each episode? The tradition of playing down the aisles and the choir loft goes deep into the centuries. Action might begin outside the church, with the audience on the church lawn; then be moved inside. The church furniture should be used as it is, if possible. Speaking and moving choirs can be used, as well as singing choruses. The choirs can also create sound accompaniments to intensify scenes with whistles, and all sorts of objects clacking and scraping together—coco-shells, kitchen utensils, screen doors. Moderns are conditioned to music backing for everything. To report that conditioning for a while and then stab people awake with silence or just words is a legitimate way to keep them involved. Costuming requires a great deal of attention. Color schemes may be developed to communicate the feeling

of the episodes. There will be many people in a church who can create beautiful and original things—the dressmaker and milliner can be encouraged to think in terms of projection through blowing everything up. Operation of the lighting and sound systems may be just the thing for high school students, but a registered electrician should check everything to be sure that safety precautions are observed.

5. Make-up must be kept simple. Actors should be taught to do their own make-up. Beauticians are now trained in eye make-up that is useful for the actor.

#### Seasonal celebrations to be held

The same process of research, selection, small group development, and care in choice of playing space, costumes, and other technical considerations can be applied to the Christmas or Easter stories, for example.

A fairly successful way of developing biblical drama is suggested by one group's dramatization of the story of Jesus and the woman at the well. The men cast as the disciples (who were walking with Jesus when the incident occurred) were assigned research secretaries to help them internalize their characters and understand the dynamics of the events. This procedure doubled the number of people for whom the process had meaning and, at the same time, helped participants to achieve a deeper level of understanding.

The secretaries were also involved in the formulation of dialogue. The "disciples" talked about Jesus' daring

and foolhardiness as the various personalities among them might have expressed themselves. As this conversation began to take form, it was recorded on tape and later played back. Changes were made, and it took several sessions to put the dialogue in final form. One advantage of doing it this way is that the rehearsals are held along with the formulation of the script. The same process was used with a group of women who talked out a little scene revealing the villagers' attitude toward the woman. The conversation between the woman and Jesus was used right out of the Bible.

#### Qualities needed in a director

The director himself is the key to working out a dramatization in this way. He must have the confidence of the people with whom he is working in at least three dimensions. First, he must be a good organizer, more than efficient and inspiring. His most useful skill is in casting, not only for acting, but for every job that is to be done. His technical knowledge must be sufficient to command respect from the people who accept responsibility as actors, staging crews, publicity makers, and all who carry out the other specialized assignments. Finally and most importantly he must reveal a deep commitment to the Head and Master of the Church. It is only from such commitment that the entire process can flow properly. Else the thing becomes either an exercise in showmanship or an idolatry of an institution. Neither is better nor worse than the other.



A Youth Fellowship committee writes a skit to help promote the Youth Budget campaign. The director calls on younger sisters to try out for a family scene.

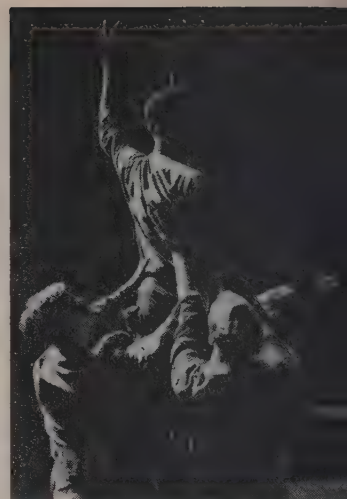
James G. Saint, Jr.



# You will need to get organized

by A. Argyle KNIGHT

Chairman, Committee on Religious Drama,  
Division of Christian Education, National Council of Churches;  
and member of staff, Youth Department, Board of Education,  
The Methodist Church, Nashville, Tennessee



Scene from "Everyman Today," by  
Walter Sorrell. (See page 9.)

**A** REVIVAL of religious drama is recognizable not only in the increased drama activity within the church, but in a growing emphasis on the religious message in the professional theater. Religious values appear more and more frequently in Broadway and off-Broadway plays that are used also by high school, college, and community theaters. The forms of religious drama have multiplied, its disciples have increased, and its creative possibilities have put it on a par with other methods of Christian education.

All dramatic activity in the church should be educational, just as all good recreation is of educational value because it adds to personal development. When informal or creative dramatization is used for the benefit of a particular group (usually small), the values achieved are primarily for the participants—not the audience. Dramatic activity may also be excellent recreation. The greater the religious value of a play, the greater its recreational and spiritual values.

## The church's concern for drama

The local church is the primary setting for the effective use of religious drama. The church should also be greatly concerned with the expression of religious drama in the school, community, and professional theater. The interdependence of these groups may be increasingly apparent. The church is dependent upon persons related to school and community theater for training its drama leaders. At the same time, it is to be hoped that the church will have a profound effect upon the religious experience and life of these professional persons. The professional theater's religious values will likewise be developed as active churchmen become increasingly involved in its efforts.

Drama must be indigenous to the life and work of the local church and a vital part of its activity. Using an appropriate play for the observance of a festival of the church is good, but this is only one occasion for drama. Religious drama is of value also to primary and junior children, junior and senior highs, college and adult church members, for people of all ages like drama and enjoy being involved in it. Its expression in the life of the church is both formal and informal.

Organizing drama interests in the local church is not easy. While the desire to use drama may be increasingly evident, the ways and means are yet to be developed in many churches.

The term "organization" may be somewhat misleading if one thinks of drama only as theater with its trappings of scenery, lights, make-up, and costumes. Skepticism is justified, for seldom has the church used theater to advantage. Theater is important and has its place, but when a play is actually produced either in the sanctuary or in the parish hall, the most important requisite is expert handling. The production of a play demands, above all else, a competent director. Whether formal drama can best be done by a small, closely-knit producing group with a label such as "St. Luke's Players" is an important question.

## The drama committee

A good drama committee is needed in any church which wishes to make serious use of drama. Such a committee should be representative of the life and work of the entire church. It should include interested key leaders from the departments of children's work, youth work, and adult work in the church school; one or more representatives from the women's and

men's organizations of the church; and certain ex-officio members such as the minister, the director of Christian education or the church school superintendent, and the choir director or minister of music.

No well-prescribed formula for the functioning of a drama committee can be set down. Its work will vary according to the size, resources, and interests of the whole church family. What works for one church may not necessarily work for another. An important question to be considered, however, is, "What commission or board shall be the sponsoring body for such a committee?" In some churches the commission or board of education takes the responsibility; in others the minister may be the official board, the vestry, or the session. The important thing is for the committee to be responsible to an administrative body. Drama should be looked upon as an integral part of the program of Christian education, not as something separate from it.

The responsibilities of the drama committee vary from church to church, but include (1) making decisions concerning the occasions on which drama will be used; (2) selecting drama material or arranging for its preparation; (3) selecting a director; (4) providing opportunities for study and training for all who are interested in participating or taking responsibility; (5) making known to the church the need for equipment, costumes, storage facilities, and financial support; (6) encouraging the most judicious use of the various kinds of drama; (7) arranging for the establishment of any "ground rules" that may be necessary about rehearsal hours, use of building and furniture.



membership in the group; and  
) appointing any subcommittees  
necessary on any aspect of the drama  
program.

On some occasions the committee's  
attention may need to be focused pri-  
marily on a major production, pos-  
sibly celebrating an event in the life  
of the church. At other times the  
committee will render services to  
groups of the church wishing to use  
drama. On many occasions it can  
help church school teachers and other  
group leaders understand how to use  
creative drama, playreadings, walk-  
ing rehearsals, situation drama, or  
role-playing for young people and  
adults.

### Drama in teaching

The use of drama as a teaching  
tool is still new, and teachers need to  
be encouraged to try it. Nursery and  
kindergarten workers should explore  
the values and skills of directed play  
activities. Workers with primaries,  
juniors, and junior highs may discover  
the rewarding growth of boys and  
girls who participate in creative  
drama. This type of activity develops  
from the ideas of the boys and girls  
and is not intended to entertain an  
audience. Because it is improvised  
from daily experiences and stories, in-  
cluding biblical ones, it is never twice  
the same.

Playreadings have an important  
place in Sunday morning classes, Sun-  
day evening sessions, and in various

weekday meetings of youth and adult  
groups. People have become so ac-  
customed to the formal or produced  
play that the idea of just reading a  
play may seem dull and uninteresting.  
Teachers, counselors, program chair-  
men, and others should be encouraged  
by the drama committee to try it.

Senior highs and older youth both  
in and out of college respond to all  
types of drama, both formal and in-  
formal. They like playreadings and  
walking rehearsals, and these activities  
have an important function in their  
meetings. One of the best ways to  
introduce or stimulate interest in a  
new unit of study is to have the group  
read a carefully selected play. Both  
young people and adults find in dra-  
matic activity tremendous opportunity  
for deepening fellowship.

Choral speaking and rhythmic  
movement may also find a significant  
place in the program of the church  
where trained leadership is available.  
Choral speaking may be used in sim-  
ple ways by small groups, but a real  
speech choir, just as a singing choir,  
requires hours of rehearsal to achieve  
balance, blend, and contrast in tone.  
Simple rhythmic movement may be  
used effectively by those who know  
what they are doing, but a rhythm  
choir also demands hours of prepara-  
tion for fine achievement. Skilled di-  
rection is essential in both areas.

When a church or church school  
undertakes formal drama, the produc-  
tion of a play, it should strive for ex-  
cellence. From an educational point

of view we should be most concerned  
about the individual and what hap-  
pens to him in relation to the play,  
but we should also be concerned  
about artistic achievement. The indi-  
vidual is most likely to have a signifi-  
cant experience of growth in a play  
when the play is well produced. The  
church should give especially careful  
attention to plays done in the sanctu-  
ary.

Significant learning in terms of  
Christian attitudes cannot result from  
the use of inferior materials. The  
choice of play is basic; careful  
thought must be given to choosing  
suitable plays for specific purposes.  
There are dependable lists of plays  
which may be consulted.<sup>1</sup> Attention  
needs to be given to choosing plays  
suitable not only for different age  
groups, but for different situations as  
well.

Drama in the forms of tableau,  
pantomime, characterization, mono-  
logue, dialogue, and antiphon may be  
used in the worship services of the  
church. Hymns, instrumental music,  
allegorical figures, symbols, and light-  
ing may enrich the experience of wor-  
ship. By using the types of drama  
mentioned above, great worship

<sup>1</sup>"Plays for the Church," a list com-  
piled by a committee of the Commission  
on Drama, National Council of Churches.  
Order from Office of Publication and Dis-  
tribution, NCC, 475 Riverside Drive, New  
York 27, New York. 50¢ apiece.



The Seminary Players  
at the Christian  
Theological Seminary  
in Indianapolis  
attend a Television  
Drama Workshop  
held in cooperation  
with Station WBFB-TV  
in that city.  
Mr. Edyvean is  
director of the  
Players.



themes, such as thanksgiving, praise, forgiveness, gratitude, giving, peace, hope, dedication, loyalty, and service, may be reverently and beautifully portrayed in the chancel or in church school departments.

Interest in the use of drama may be latent in a church, but the need for drama may be great. Its develop-

ment should not be left to the sporadic efforts of individual groups. Drama, as well as the other arts, can be used throughout the church program to the glory of God. The mission of the church can be extended through its use. But the conditions for the rewarding use of drama (vision, leadership, serious interest,

facilities, motivation, support) are not likely to come into existence unless a church appoints a competent committee. A committee is needed whose members see that in a time of increasing depersonalization of life the gospel's relevance can be made more apparent and challenging through drama.

# Building and equipment for drama

by Arthur C. RISSE

Architect, Wichita, Kansas;  
Faculty member, Religious Drama Workshop

**A**N INADEQUATE ARCHITECTURAL environment and a lack of mechanical equipment seriously hinder a drama group seeking to raise its standards of performance. Few churches—old, new, or those still in the planning stage—have the facilities that enable a drama group to present plays easily. Blame for this deficiency is frequently placed on the architect, but the fault is not all his. Most play directors and even many technical directors of theater organizations are not able to give the architect specific information about space allotments, an electrical distribution system, and lighting equipment and accessories. Often the demands made by an uninformed director not only are unwarranted because of the cost but also are beyond the actual needs of the program. Unless directors and sponsors are willing to acquire technical knowledge, or unless a consultant is employed, facilities for drama in the church will continue to be mediocre.

Many forms of dramatic activities require no special provisions other than adequate space. Informal drama, play-readings, and creative drama can be performed almost anywhere. However, for more formal productions the room must be large enough to seat the audience comfortably and to give the actors an area which allows them freedom of movement. There must

be enough illumination for the actors to be seen, and the acoustics must be such that the actors can easily be heard. The shape of the room is relatively immaterial, but its volume with respect to the size of the audience is important acoustically. Rooms in which plays are presented should have a ceiling height of not less than fourteen feet.

A social hall or multipurpose room offers the skillful director an opportunity for many kinds of flexible staging: the arena plan, in which the audience surrounds the acting area (Plan I); a C-shaped arrangement, in which the audience is seated on three sides of the acting area (Plan II); the alley plan, in which the actors perform in a narrow area between two rows of spectators (Plan III). Also, a proscenium stage might be erected temporarily in a room where the ceiling height permits.

Many production techniques for the sanctuary and the social hall are similar. Lighting instruments, certain pieces of lighting control equipment, some elements of scenery, and most costumes can be used in both places. Plays presented in the sanctuary are likely to be formal in nature. Usually they are produced with a minimum of scenery or none at all. If scenery is used, it must be harmonious with the architectural dignity of the sanctuary. People, place, and his-

torical period are suggested by costumes and hand properties. Costumes must be well designed and expertly made, for cheap and shoddy craftsmanship has no place in the sanctuary.

Proper lighting will help the actor establish the atmosphere and mood important in arousing the emotional responses of the audience. In the sanctuary usually the light should come from above at an angle of 30 degrees to 45 degrees in the vertical plane and at approximately 45 degrees in the horizontal plane, one source placed at the right and one at the left of the area. In addition to this cross-lighting, it is desirable to bring some light directly from the front to serve as "fill" light for softening the shadows on the faces of the actors.

Plays presented in the social hall may be less formal than sanctuary plays, but because of the close relation between audience and actors, materials for the production must be carefully selected, scenery and costumes well designed, and craftsmanship expert.

Elaborate scenery is impossible in many styles of flexible staging, such as the arena and alley plans. Lighting is a chief factor in creating the essential atmosphere; more satisfactory lighting effects are achieved when the audience is seated on a series of platforms of varying heights. In the arena and alley arrangements and frequently in the C-shaped plan, light should be focused on the actors from three positions, at the angles prescribed for sanctuary drama.

Designs on the floor of the acting area, in keeping with the theme of the play, are effective when the audience is seated on platforms. The designs of John Ashby Conway for the Penthouse Theater at the University of Washington, in Seattle, are good examples of scenery for arena staging.

It is essential in flexible staging to provide a neutral area between the acting area and the audience to achieve the distance necessary aesthetically for good theater. Three to four feet should be allowed between the edge of the acting area and the first row of chairs. The proximity of ac-



and audience makes the use of heavy make-up unnecessary; the make-up that is required must be expertly applied so it will not appear natural or even grotesque.

To make possible the use of some lighting instruments and elements of a lighting control system in both the sanctuary and the social hall, special lighting panels known as cross-connecting panels are needed in both locations. These panels should be installed at the time the building is constructed, although they may be added to existing structures. Portable summer boards are usually the most satisfactory means of controlling the lights in social hall productions. The general lighting in many sanctuaries is controlled by dimmers. These dimmers, if manually operated and not motor driven, may also dim lighting equipment for play presentations if they are properly installed in conjunction with the cross-connecting panel. Mechanical devices with electrical outlets adjacent to them must be used in the sanctuary for mounting the portable lighting instruments. The lighting control stations must be in a position that the operator can have a clear view of the acting area.

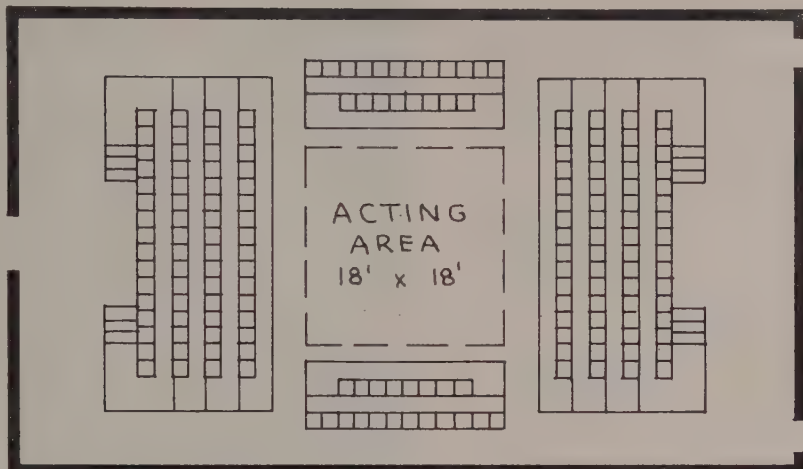
The same platforms that are used in the social hall for elevating the audience may also be used in the sanctuary when it is necessary to elevate the acting area. However, the exposed surfaces should be covered with plywood and finished to blend with the sanctuary decorative theme. The tops may be covered with a carpet pad or a carpet to match the one in the sanctuary.

It is neither difficult nor exorbitantly expensive to provide the necessary facilities for both sanctuary and social hall, especially since a duplicate of much equipment is possible. Platforms, lighting instruments, costumes, and scenery may be added through the years, but it is essential to provide from the beginning (1) an adequate source of electrical power, (2) a useful distribution of electrical outlets, (3) instrument mounting devices, and (4) a lighting control center which includes a special cross-connecting panel designed for use with portable or stationary dimmer boards. Because much of this equipment is portable, adequate storage space is a necessity.

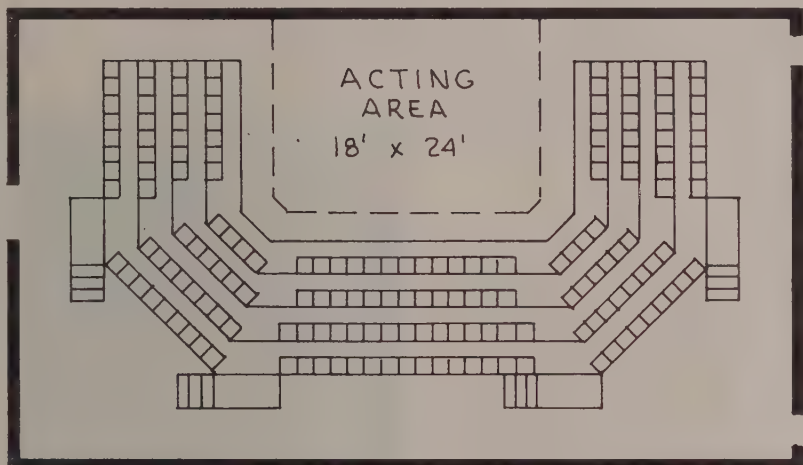
The effectiveness of drama in the church is dependent to a great extent on the production facilities in the locations where plays are presented. A church interested in a drama program must seriously consider its needs and make use of the best available resources in working out its plans and setting up facilities.

## THEATER ARRANGEMENTS IN A SOCIAL HALL

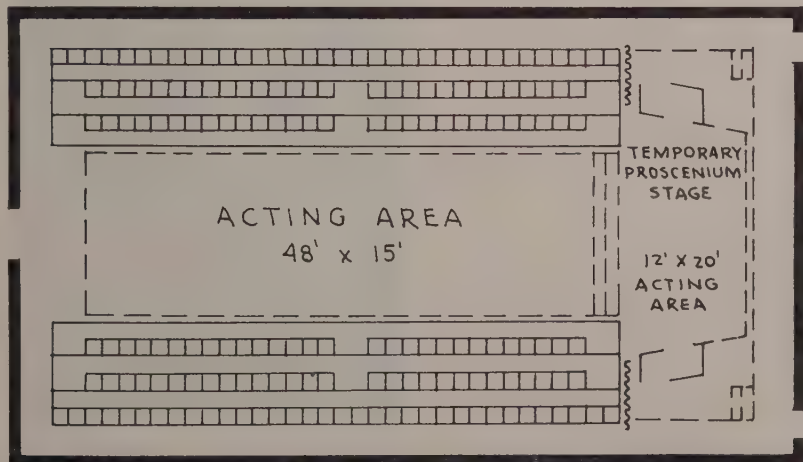
Arthur C. Risser



I. ARENA ARRANGEMENT SEATING 168, ROOM 70' x 40'



II. C-SHAPED ARRANGEMENT SEATING 170.



III. ALLEY ARRANGEMENT SEATING 190.



# The Christian Drama Council of Canada:

by Douglas D. MAXWELL

Chairman, Executive Committee, Christian Drama Council of Canada

**A**T FIRST GLANCE, the Christian Drama Council of Canada is anything but a "dramatic" organization. Somehow it doesn't exude the "theater" as one might reasonably expect from its title. There are no smudged costume sketches in the office, no residue of greasepaint, no faded press clippings, and no bedraggled wire-and-gauze angel's wings lying in the corner. But on closer inspection the Christian Drama Council abounds in dramatic values. It has known moments of crisis, suspense, exhilaration, and despair. It has fought battles, won victories, tasted the sweetness of romance, and charted the pits of depression.

What, then, is the Christian Drama Council of Canada? How did it start? What is its function in the church and theatrical life of Canada?

## What is the Council?

The Council is the only body in Canada set up (as its Constitution states) "to foster the art of religious drama as a medium for the expression and communication of Christian truth." It is an interdenominational association striving to improve the standard of choice of play, of direction, of acting, and of presentation within the local church. It is a concerned group of volunteers steeped in theater, a leavening influence in the field of religious education, and a perennial deficit lightened by unexpected donations.

## How did it start?

The Council, formed in February, 1954, came into being largely through the efforts of Isabel Squires, an English Methodist deaconess. She believed passionately in the cause of drama used in the service of God, and she proclaimed this belief at every opportunity. At first the Council's office was located in the small bedroom-sitting room Miss Squires occupied. It was not in jest that she was described as "living, breathing, eating, and sleeping" a crusade for Christian drama. She quickly gained for the Council the acceptance and endorsement of all the major Protestant de-

nominations in Canada, and just as quickly she ran headlong into the problems that bedevil any Canadian enterprise—problems of geography, population, and language.

## What is its function?

Canada's 17,000,000 inhabitants speak two languages and are spread thinly across 4,000 miles of land. To serve such a widely scattered people demands ingenuity and skill. Today the major service offered by the Council is centered in the library, the largest of its kind in Canada. It is an invaluable aid to members who ask for help in the selection of plays, for technical advice, and for suggestions on using dramatic methods in re-

ligious education. Reading copies of plays are loaned for a small charge. In addition, the Council has sponsored a play-writing competition, offered special summer workshops, and has provided weekend courses on various aspects of religious drama in many parts of the country. All workshops and conferences are available for individual churches and organizations on request. A local church may secure help by writing to the Council (71 Bloor Street West, Toronto 5). Churches and individuals may join the Council (\$3.00 a year) to be eligible for this service.

In 1956 romance entered the deliberations of the executive. Miss Squires met and married the Reverend J. N. Clark of Victoria, B.C. Miss Marion Brillinger, a long-time friend and associate, then took over the guidance of the Council. The work continued to expand, and when Miss Brillinger moved on to an executive position with the United Church of Canada last year, the Reverend Gordon Parker of Winnipeg was appointed National Director. Mr. Parker is a trained theologian with professional theater experience and helping to make the Council even more widely known.

The Council itself does not present plays. Rather, its aim is to encourage local groups to improve their standards and to make the fullest possible use of the medium of drama. In the field the Council has received invaluable assistance from the Company of Pilgrims. In five years of touring, this group of dedicated actors and actresses specializing in religious drama has provided an outstanding example of the relation between theater and theology, and, in addition, has provided the Council with much needed financial assistance.

Income from memberships, donations, and grants has inevitably lagged behind expenditures; on a few occasions, crises have threatened the continuation of the Council. Nevertheless, the Christian Drama Council of Canada has weathered the storm. It continues to grow, to prosper, and to make known to Canadians the effectiveness of drama in teaching the eternal truths of faith.



Scene from "The Cup of Trembling," by Elizabeth Berryhill, directed by Tom F. Driver at Union Theological Seminary.





The Philosophers, the Scientist, and the Student, in "The Angel Who Wouldn't Go Home," by Miss Loomis, presented by drama students at Vincennes University.

by Amy G. LOOMIS

Director of Drama and Professor of Speech,  
Vincennes University, Vincennes, Indiana

# How To select a play

COULD YOU RECOMMEND a simple little one-act play, with a wholesome comedy situation, lots of roles for women, simple costumes, and a religious message?" Requests like this come frequently to my desk and remind me that we need to re-evaluate again and again our methods of choosing a good religious drama. The above-described anomaly does not exist, praise be! It is well to re-evaluate the axiom that there is no such thing as "a simple little one-act play." To improve the quality of drama in the church, we must choose a play for church production with careful attention to two basic questions: Is there a clear statement of good religious content? Is it a good play?

To help him answer the first question, the drama director is referred to the first article in this issue. He would also be wise to discuss the play with his choice with the minister of the local church to be sure that it is appropriate to the tenets or discipline of his denomination. For instance, *Murder in the Cathedral* by T. S. Eliot<sup>1</sup> is a classic religious drama, but its Catholic background and slanted presentation of an ancient and perplexing story would make it a doubtful choice for performance by a conservative Protestant congregation. So much education would be needed to secure true audience participation

that much of the impact of the story would be lost. Such a test, however, should not rule out the occasional reading-study of a controversial play. *Major Barbara* by George Bernard Shaw<sup>1</sup> is full of provocative questions concerning the principles and procedure of the godly. It would be a good choice for a reading-study by mature adults prepared to have their traditional convictions questioned and their Christian prejudices tested. The "ye-e-e-s, BUT—" session could be exciting.

## Tests for a play

Tests for a *good play* are less elusive. A play has a definite shape. The dramatist may produce a series of episodes or visualizations, as in a pageant; or he may dramatize a discussion for a club meeting. However, he has not written a play until he has selected a worthy theme, seized upon a moment of crisis for its expression, led up to this moment through a series of incidents building in suspense, reached a satisfying and convincing conclusion, and presented the story in terms of three-dimensional characters using believable and beautiful language. This is a very different problem from the construction of episodes for a pageant. Though the play in its complexity and profundity is the most difficult literary form, it is the frequent choice of writers with unin-

formed, unskilled, and untrained enthusiasm.

Thus it is important that we know something about *plays* as well as about *doctrine* before we choose a play for production. *Writing the One-Act Religious Play* by Fred Eastman (Friendship Press, 1948) is useful to the nonprofessional director at this point. On pages 57 and 58, the author lists several simple tests by which a writer of plays may evaluate his products. These tests may also serve the needs of the play-choosing committee. Three of the test questions are especially helpful:

(1) "Is the conflict adequate?" In the twentieth century posing an adequate conflict should not be a problem, yet often the writer of drama for the church contrives a play of trivial choices for puppet characters. When we choose a church play, let us avoid the trivial. As Christopher Fry has written in *A Sleep of Prisoners*,<sup>2</sup> "Affairs are now soul size."

(2) "Do the characters seem real?" At this point plays written for special occasions or for propaganda purposes frequently fall down. I have recently been studying some new efforts from a respected source purporting to intensify our missionary zeal through drama. The conflicts are adequate, but all the characters sound alike; it is hard to distinguish the men from the women. In contrast with them are such characters as Dismas in *A Child Is Born* by Stephen Vincent

<sup>1</sup>Footnote references are at the end of this article, on page 48.



Benet,<sup>3</sup> Judith in *He Came Seeing* by Mary P. Hamlin,<sup>1</sup> Mis' Moran and Peter in *The Neighbors* by Zona Gale,<sup>3</sup> or the Sacristan and Bautista in *Holy Night* by Martinez Sierra.<sup>3</sup> These are real people—truly, objectively, and affectionately observed. They do and say what an audience expects such people to do and say under the pressure of conflict.

(3) "Does the play reveal a struggle common to the experience of the audience?" How can we hope to involve the emotions of an audience if the central problem of the play is purely academic?

Let me add two of my own tests.

(4) Is the language suitable and effective? In our search for plays we may discover that the best drama is often poetic drama. This need not be alarming. If the poetry is good, the lines will be easier to memorize than the staccato, fragmented lines of naturalistic prose.

In a good play there are usually a few "big" speeches. Some contemporary producers are a little uneasy in handling them, but often in such speeches theme and plot coalesce to drive home the author's point.

(5) Are the roles worth playing and the lines worth memorizing? I have been a professional player and can sympathize with the actor confronted by a colorless role and flat lines. Little can be done with "Nor I, my lord . . ."! But there are no dull roles in such plays as *The Gardener Who Was Afraid of Death* by Henri Gheon,<sup>4</sup> *Arms and the Man* by George Bernard Shaw,<sup>1</sup> *Our Town* by Thornton Wilder,<sup>1</sup> or *The Builders* by Frances Dyer Eckardt.<sup>3</sup> Everyone learning the lines and studying the characters is richer for the experience.

Let us analyze two plays, a serious drama and a comedy, in terms of this brief set of criteria.

### "The Prodigal Son"

The first is *The Prodigal Son* by R. H. Ward<sup>5</sup> (royalty on request). Is it good religion? Certainly. It brings new and deep insights to the concept of forgiveness as presented in the parable in Luke 15. Is it good drama? The central conflict is the universal struggle between man's pride and God's forgiveness, stated in human terms to which audience and players may readily relate. The characters are well drawn. The sons are believable and vividly contrasted; the mother is bewildered but endearing; and in the father religious drama has one of its great acting roles.

The lines are strong and appropriate, although the play is wordy and a few cuts would help. Some of the

"big" speeches, for instance, the "ring speech," are classics. The Presenters are somewhat static, and for this reason might read their lines from scrolls; but the acting roles will demand all that the players can give.

The play requires a production of style. The director might study the farm paintings of Grant Wood for ideas. A dance or rhythmic choir might develop the worldly scenes in effective pantomime. The imagination of the author fires the imagination of the director. This play is a difficult but rewarding choice.

### "Spreading the news"

A play of lighter vein is *Spreading the News* by Lady Augusta Gregory<sup>1</sup> (royalty, \$5.00). Is it good religion? It preaches, but with ample humor, a perennially important sermon about gossip, and the wide gap between Christian protestations and behavior. Is it good drama? The central conflict is quite adequate to serve the comic purpose. The play exists at more than one level. It tells its story in broad comedy and preaches its sermon under the laughter.

The characters are real enough to make us uncomfortable. They are Irish peasants, drawn with few subtleties, but we can see ourselves in them as clearly as the caricaturist sees us. The play reveals a struggle common to the experience of the audience—not the story of the hayfork, of course, but the story of gossip, the real story in the comedy.

The language is broad Irish dialect. If it is memorized and read precisely as written, it will provide its own cadence without strain on the players. Every one of the roles is worth playing. None of these timorous, bossy, critical, ignorant, superstitious, ridiculous humans should be slighted! Each is "alive, O alive!" Curtains, a bench, and a table and chair for Mrs. Tarpey make an easy setting; the costumes may be quaintly comic. The play is a romp, calling for broad pantomime and rollicking speed.

### Look for the best

Let me urge anyone selecting plays to read all the plays he can find; to watch for new ones and look over old ones. Usually the plays of best quality require the payment of a modest royalty, but the quality more than justifies the relatively small expense. In general, the great play is easier to present than the feeble effort of the untalented writer. In the great play the conflict and characters are so truly indicated that adequate players can achieve surprising success just by

reading the lines. In the poorer effort, the bare bones of the play are left to be draped by the nonprofessional actor's skill, and the resultant semi-nudity is a bit startling.

The following play lists will be helpful to the person choosing plays:

*Plays for the Church*,<sup>6</sup> compiled by a committee of the Commission on Drama, National Council of Churches of Christ, 1957.

*Best Plays for the Church*, by Mildred Hahn Enterline, Christian Education Press, 1505 Race St., Philadelphia 2, Pa., revised edition, 1952.

*Selected Plays for Christmas*, compiled for the Board of Education, Methodist Church, 1959. Box 871, Nashville 2, Tenn.

Here are ten of my favorite plays, with suggestions about where and how they may be used.

*Androcles and the Lion*, by George Bernard Shaw<sup>1</sup> (royalty on application). The "conflict between living beliefs and dead social forms" is timely and exciting. The play is good for reading-study by advanced groups and effective for production.

*Aria da Capo* by Edna St. Vincent Millay<sup>3</sup> (royalty, \$15.00). This play should first be read as a study. It is a poetic peace play and demands imaginative production, but is not beyond the skill of the nonprofessional.

*Christmas in the Market Place* by Henri Gheon (translated by Crozier,<sup>5</sup> or translated by Sister Marie Thomas;<sup>3</sup> royalty, \$10.00). This folk drama, including a Nativity play, should be seen as well as read. It does not belong in the sanctuary. It might make a strong interdenominational presentation for community use. I conclude it with the Nativity scene.

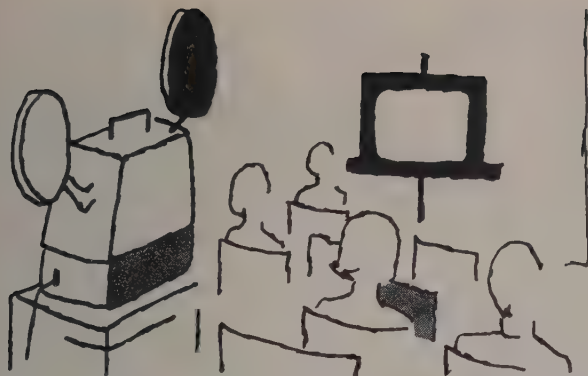
*Holy Night* by G. Martinez Sierra<sup>3</sup> (royalty, \$10.00). This play is worth reading and studying. The production is heavy, but very beautiful. Although the background is Spanish Catholic, the story transcends national and denominational lines. Any congregation would be moved by Mary's prayer beginning "To the misguided, to the persecuted. . ."

*Book of Job* by Amy Goodhue Loomis, based on Moulton's *A Modern Reader's Bible* (secure directly from the author;<sup>7</sup> royalty, \$10.00). The debate is relieved by the use of a speaking choir. This play meets the demands of sanctuary drama. The chorus is an anachronism, but it serves two or three valid purposes, e.g., to create variety.

*The Hour Glass* by William Butler Yeats<sup>1</sup> (royalty, \$10.00). This play

(Continued on page 46)





## A-V'S IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Prepared by the  
Department of Audio-Visual  
and Broadcast Education of  
the National Council of  
Churches

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### A-V's on Drama in the Church

In keeping with the theme of this special issue on drama, the first part of this section will be devoted to a list of suggested audio-visual materials dealing with the subject. This list was prepared by the Rev. Edward A. George, Counselor in Audio-Visual Education, Board of Christian Education, United Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

Please note that except where indicated, these materials have NOT been evaluated in the AVRGE evaluation program.

### Filmstrip

*How to Produce a Church Play*  
88 frames, b & w, script, guide. Produced by the Oberlin Graduate School of Theology, 1953. Available from the producer and Yale University Divinity School Visual Education Service. Sale: \$4.00. (Evaluated in AVRGE:5, page 153)

### Motion Pictures

*Acting Problems*  
11 minutes, b & w. Produced by the

International Film Board. Available from Bailey Films and many university and educational film libraries. Approximate rental: \$3.00.

In a visual presentation usually unavailable in study groups, the director of a dramatics class shows how a realistic performance depends on the actor's ability to be the character portrayed. Demonstrated is the need for gestures, attitude, muscular movement, and timing identified with the age and type of character being created.

For: Junior high through adults

### *Building a Set*

11 minutes, b & w. Produced by the International Film Board. Available from Bailey Films and many university and educational film libraries. Approximate rental: \$3.00.

From the designer's plan, the carpenter and backstage crew build the set. An outline is drawn on the stage floor (so rehearsals can go on), materials are ordered, flats built, platforms and other details completed and painted. Handling a lash line, adjusting a stage brace, bracing with a jack, and other techniques are demonstrated.

For: Junior high through adults

### *Curtain Time*

30 minutes, b & w. Produced by the National Film Board of Canada. Available from Contemporary Films. Rental: \$7.00.

(Evaluated in AVRGE:5, page 86)

### *Designing a Set*

11 minutes, color. Produced by the International Film Board. Available from Bailey Films and many university and educational film libraries. Approximate rental: \$5.00.

This film shows all the steps encountered in a designing problem, from pencil and color outlines to models.

For: Junior high through adults

### *Directing a Play*

11 minutes, b & w. Produced by the International Film Board. Available from Bailey Films and many university and educational film libraries. Approximate rental: \$3.00.

The film shows the function of the director in play production and the importance of proper relation of stage position, grouping, time movement, and set-

ting in achieving convincing portrayals.  
For: Junior high through adults

### *Let's Try Choral Reading*

11 minutes, b & w. Produced by the McGraw-Hill Book Co. (Text-film Dept.). Available from university and other educational film libraries. Rental rates will vary.

(Evaluated in AVRGE:5, page 185)

### *Make-Up for Boys*

11 minutes, color. Produced by the International Film Board. Available from Bailey Films and many university and educational film libraries. Approximate rental: \$5.00.

A young actor makes up as the boy Tom Sawyer, then follows with Muff Potter, the old tramp in the story. This contrast in appearance shows how make-up, effectively handled, eliminates "type casting" and permits allocation of parts based on talent, without need to consider physical similarities.

For: Junior high through adults

### *Make-Up for Girls*

11 minutes, color. Produced by the International Film Board. Available from Bailey Films and many university and educational film libraries. Approximate rental: \$5.00.

A young actress makes up as the girl Becky Thatcher, and as an elderly spinster, Aunt Polly, for a stage presentation of *Tom Sawyer*. Authenticity of characters achieved by make-up demonstrates complete severance from the normal appearance of an actress.

For: Junior high through adults

### *Managing a Play*

11 minutes, b & w. Produced by the International Film Board. Available from Bailey Films and many university and educational film libraries. Approximate rental: \$3.00.

This is a detailed study of the responsibilities of the publicity director and manager and their contribution to a successful play production.

For: Junior high through adults

### *Story Acting Is Fun*

11 minutes, color or b & w, guide. Produced by Coronet Films. Available from most university and other educational film libraries. Rental rates will vary. (Evaluated in AVRGE:5, page 285)

### *Worship the Lord*

18 minutes, color. Produced by the Oberlin Graduate School of Theology. Available from the producer. Rental: \$7.50.

(Evaluated in AVRGE:5, page 335)

## Current Evaluations

(from a nationwide network of interdenominational committees)

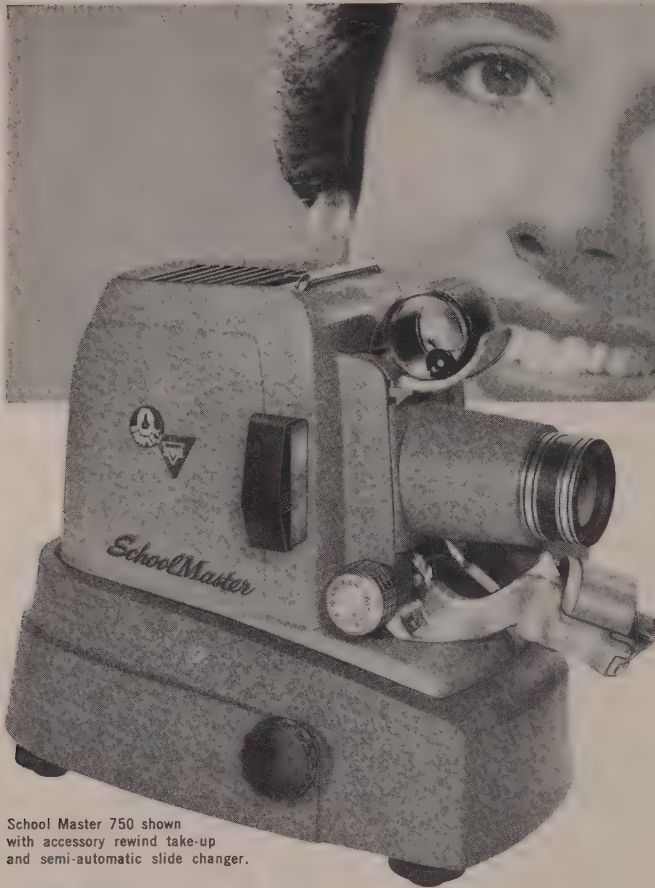
### It Happened to Me

30-minute motion picture, color. Produced by The American Lutheran Church (Public Relations Department), 1957. Available from the producer's Augsburg Publishing House.\* Rental: \$8.00.

A man is living in the "lap of luxury,"



# THE BEST IN SIGHT AND SOUND . . .

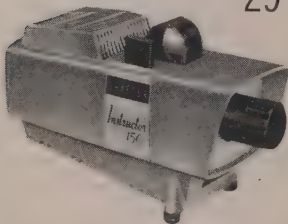


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*International Journal of Religious Education*



apparently unconcerned about family life and emphatically unconcerned with religion. Everything is going along smoothly until an accident causes months of pain and permanent disability. Eventually, however, these things open the door for the minister's witness and the man's conversion to a new life.

Generally speaking, the committees felt that this film was realistic in its portrayal, especially in the depiction of agony, physical and mental. A strong feature is that the story does not come to a miraculous conclusion merely because the man discovered the value of prayer. A common reaction, however, was that the ending was somewhat "preachy" and a little bit too pat. The change of character was thought to be too abrupt. With this weakness in mind, the film is recommended for discussion with young people through adults in conservative groups, but acceptable in other churches.

(VI-A-2, 1)†

### To Great the Light

28-minute motion picture, color. Produced by the American Bible Society, 1960. Available from the producer.\* Rental: \$4.00.

We see a child without sight take her full part in a church school class of seeing children because of her ability to read Braille. The film then goes on to tell of the development of this system and its usefulness. Also shown is the work of the Society in many countries, distributing Braille Bibles and providing records and tapes and simple playing machines in areas of high illiteracy.

Recommended for instruction, promotion, and motivation with juniors through adults, this film does a thorough job of explaining and promoting this important work among sightless people of all ages. Technical qualities are generally excellent, especially the beautiful photography and the effective musical background. The only possible weakness is that perhaps too much was attempted for one film, which makes the development of the subject "jumpy" in places. This is not, however, a serious drawback.

(III-B-3)†

### The Therapy of Prayer

30-minute motion picture, b & w. Produced by World Wide Pictures, 1959. Available from some denominational and other WWP film libraries.\* Rental: \$10.00.

This is a case study of a young couple with a small child who suffers from stuttering and excessive temper tantrums. Upon consulting a psychiatrist, they discover that a major part of the child's problem is their own lack of love and understanding. The child slowly begins to improve as the parents bring more love into their relationships.

A believable story line and excellent acting make this film very useful in helping people to be sensitive to the problems present in many lives. The title is somewhat misleading in that there is more

emphasis on a broader therapy than on the role of prayer. Some viewers may object to the rather prompt resolution of the problem, but otherwise the film is recommended for discussion and motivation with young adults and adults, especially leaders, teachers, and parents.

(VII-G; VI-A-1)†

### This Salutary Gift

64-frame filmstrip, color, script, guide, with one 33 1/3 rpm recording. Produced by The American Lutheran Church (Board of Parish Education), 1959. Available from the producer's Wartburg Press.\* Sale: \$12.00.

Through the eye of the camera, we are taken into a Lutheran Communion service.

As the liturgy is carried forward by the minister and the congregation, a young man, a middle-aged man, and an older woman meditate on the words of the service which have special meaning to them. A narrator summarizes the values to be found in the service.

An accurate and convincing picture of a congregation worshipping in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, this filmstrip would be useful in many areas of church life. The lack of young people in the congregation makes it more useful with adults, but confirmation or membership classes of junior highs and senior highs would find value in it. The real value of the strip is that it interprets the sacra-

(Continued on page 45)



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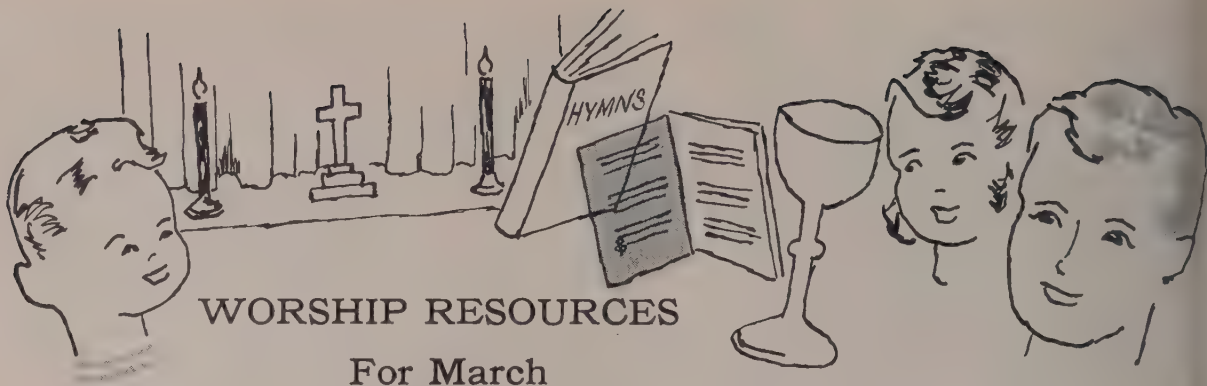
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†See "Subject Area" Index in your AVR:5.





## WORSHIP RESOURCES

### For March

# Primary Department

by Martha Elliott DEICHLER\*

THEME FOR THE LENTEN SEASON  
(Continued): *Prayer*

### For the Leader

In order to be an effective spiritual leader, the teacher or superintendent needs daily to enrich his own prayer life. There could be no better time than the Lenten season for him to ask himself questions such as these: Are my prayers—morning, evening, mealtimes—so much a part of the routine that they have become meaningless? Do I habitually use set phrases and expressions? Are requests for help my only unscheduled prayers, or do I praise God when prompted by the joy of friendship, the beauty of nature, or the courage of consecration? Is daily communion with God a vital factor in my life? Does my prayer life include waiting and listening as well as praising and asking? Are my convictions strong enough to help bring about the answers to prayer, or does my responsibility end with the utterance of words?

A sincere evaluation and reconsecration of one's prayer life will help the leader of worship guide primary boys and girls to a better understanding of this important part of their religious experience.

During conversations with parents, or at parent-teacher meetings, teachers should encourage parents to help their children engage in meditation and prayer throughout the week. The following books are recommended for use by the children themselves. Resources from them may also be used in the church school worship period.

\*Pastor's wife, East Penfield Baptist Church, Fairport, New York, with two primary children in the parsonage.

*God Loves Me* (1954); *God Plans for Happy Families* (1955); *Round About Me* (1953). All by Elizabeth B. Jones, Warner Press, Anderson, Indiana, \$1.95 each.

... *And God Cares for Me*, by Alverta Breitweiser, Warner Press, 1957, \$1.50.

*Then I Think of God*, by Mabel A. Niedermeyer, Bethany Press, 1958, \$1.75. (Descriptions of these books and other listings are found in the leaflet, *Children's Books for Quiet Moments*, by Lola Hazelwood, Office of P & D, National Council of Churches, 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, N. Y., 5¢ each, \$3.50 a hundred.)

The leader will find many fine resources—prayers, poems, and prayer hymns—in the following books, which are probably in the church school library:

*Children's Worship in the Church School; More Children's Worship in the Church School*, by Jeanette Perkins Brown, Harper & Brothers. *As Children Worship*, by Jeanette E. Perkins, Pilgrim Press.

*Tell Me About Prayer*, Mary Alice Jones, Rand McNally.

*Grow as You Pray, Pray as You Grow*, special issue of the *International Journal of Religious Education*, 75¢, cash with order.

**CALLS TO WORSHIP:** "Walk slowly, be silent"; "Father of all children"; and others from *As Children Worship*. See also other books mentioned above.

#### HYMNS:

See prayer hymns in *Hymns for Primary Worship* (Westminster or Judson Press) and in the books by Jeanette Perkins mentioned above. This will be a good time to learn some new prayer hymns. Children should come to know them well enough to sing them at home and when alone.

#### PRAYERS:

During the Lenten season the worship leader may want to guide the children in a number of forms of prayer, such as:

1. Prayer by the leader, summarizing the ideas given in a group discussion.
2. Directed prayer—silent prayer by group following thought suggestions by the leader.
3. Litanies—perhaps composed in class sessions or by a committee.
4. The Lord's Prayer—the words should be known perfectly, but please don't repeat it—pray it!
5. Spontaneous prayer given by a child.
6. Sentence prayers offered voluntarily by children and teachers.
7. Prayers of other people. (See list of devotional books above. There may also be some suitable selections from the Psalms and the *Book of Common Prayer* or a

collection of worship resources published by the denomination.)

8. Hymn prayers, and prayer responses (See the section "I Will Sing to the Lord" in *Hymns for Primary Worship*.)

### 1. A Time to Pray

(For resources see above. The following order of service may be used regularly or adapted to the situation.)

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

#### HYMN OF PRAISE

#### OFFERING and RESPONSE

#### SCRIPTURE

#### CONVERSATION:

When do you like to pray? Is there one time in each day when you always pray? Sometimes people are helped by knowing that others are doing the same thing they are and at the same time. (Briefly recall the story of "The Angelus" as the painting by Jean Millet is displayed; or remind the children of days or weeks of prayer sponsored by the church.) "The bells in the church spire (shown in "The Angelus") called the people to pray and, regardless of what they were doing, all stopped to give thanks to God. Do you like to pray when you know others are praying too? Or does it disturb you to have to pray at a certain time? Why do you think many people pray at bedtime? Does it help you to think then about the things that have happened during the day? Does it make you want to do some things differently? Do you pray when you awaken in the morning? Why? Does the freshness of the new day make you think of God? Do you feel like thanking him for the gift of another morning?

Have you ever been surprised by wanting to pray at an unusual time? When? Have you ever felt as if you would explode if you couldn't express your happiness to God? Have you ever felt that you needed his strength and prayed for it without even saying words?

POEM: "God Is Always Near"

The woods are bare and quiet now. All I can hear is the swish of the leaves beneath my feet and the sound of the wind in the treetops.

The squirrels are taking a little nap in the oak tree, with their furry tails for blankets. The chipmunks are hiding away in their underground home, and the raccoons are sleeping soundly in their hollow tree.

All the trees have pulled warm little jackets over their tender buds. The flowers are tucked away beneath the warm brown leaves.



Everything is so still and quiet, I walk softly, softly through the leaves. Then I stop beside a white-barked tree, just to listen and to think awhile. God seems so very, very near me while I am in the woods in winter. I want to whisper loving words to him, and I am sure he hears me. And, oh, sometimes when I am standing there, it seems as though the whole woods were filled with prayer; not asking words, but softly whispered thank-yous to God for all his goodness and his love.

Thank you, heavenly Father,  
For all your loving care,  
And all your loving-kindness  
Around me everywhere.

ELIZABETH B. JONES<sup>1</sup>

CLOSING PRAYER

## God Does Answer Prayer

DEDICATION:

WHEN GOD ANSWERS<sup>2</sup>

A boy overheard his younger sister saying her prayers one night. She was earnestly asking God to get her a pony for her birthday that was not very far off. Her brother made fun of the girl and told her she was wasting her time.

"Why," he laughed, "if God did send you a pony, where would you keep it here in town?"

"I'm not worrying about that," replied the trusting girl. "I only know that no matter what, God will answer my prayer."

Her brother gave her a "wait and see" look and left her with her prayers. The birthday came and went, and there was no pony. "See," teased the boy, "I told you that your prayer wouldn't be answered."

"Oh, but it was answered," argued the girl.

"I don't see any pony," insisted the brother. "So, God didn't answer your prayer, now, did he?"

"Oh, yes, he did," smiled the girl triumphantly. "Only this time he said 'No.'"

"No" is as much an answer to prayer as "Yes" sometimes. God knows our needs before we do, and we are apt to ask for things we would be better off without.

PRAYER: O God, often we pray and ask you to grant our desires. Help us to be wise enough to try to fit into your plan and not to ask that you fit into our plan. Jesus tried to find your will for his life. Help us to pray for your will too. Amen.

## What Do We Pray For?

STORY:

ASKING GOD FOR WHAT WE WANT

"May we ask God for anything we want?" Bobby asked.

"We may talk with God about anything we wish to talk with him about, Bobby," his mother told him. "But there are many things which I hope you will never ask him for."

"Why? Why shouldn't I ask him for anything I want?"

"Because some things we want are not good to want."

Just then Mary ran in. "I want a big bicycle, Mother."

Bobby laughed at her. "You couldn't ride a big bicycle, Mary. You're a little girl. You'd fall off and hurt yourself."

"But I want one. Ben has a big one. It goes fast."

"Yes, it does, dear," her mother agreed.

"But you will have to wait until you are big like Ben is before you can ride a big bicycle."

Mary looked cross. Her mother said, "I see Susan out on the sidewalk with her tricycle. You can ride your tricycle right now."

So Mary smiled again, and went out to ride her tricycle.

"Is that what you mean about praying for something that is not good for us?" Bobby asked. "Like Mary asking for a big bicycle?"

"That is part of it, Bobby." Then his mother went on. "There is something else we should think of, too. Sometimes we pray for what is good for us to have, but which God plans for us to get by working ourselves." And Bobby remembered about having to water his garden to get flowers.

"And sometimes," Mother added, "we pray for things that would not be fair for us to have. We ask for more than our share, and do not think about what somebody else may need."

"Like wanting ice cream when somebody else hasn't had any milk?" Bobby asked. "My teacher said we did that."

"Something like that, son. And sometimes we try to get our own way by asking God to make everything go just the way we want it to go."

"Like asking him always to let us win a game?"

"Yes, Bobby," his mother said. "And sometimes we even ask God to hurt somebody else so we can have what we want."

"That would not be good," Bobby agreed. "What kind of prayer should we make, Mother? How should we pray for what we want?"

And so Bobby's mother helped him to make some prayers about the things he wanted.

MARY ALICE JONES<sup>3</sup>

CONVERSATION:

What things do you ask God for? Is it right to pray for things just for yourself? Suppose you pray for sunshine and the farmer nearby prays for rain. How can God grant both wishes? Should our requests be only for things we want? What else should we think of as we ask God for things? Jesus' disciples didn't know how to pray, so one day they asked him to teach them. We call the prayer he taught them the Lord's Prayer. What did Jesus ask God for in that prayer? What should that prayer mean to us? Can it help us in making up our own prayers?

POEM: "In Jesus' Name"  
I would remember Jesus  
When I pray, dear God.  
And I would make my prayer  
In his dear name.  
He asked not for  
Special favors  
And gifts he did not need.  
And so I pray that I may be  
Unselfish in the prayers  
I make.  
He loved all men,  
And so I pray  
That I may love them, too.  
He prayed to know  
Your will for him;  
And so I pray that I may know

What you would have me do.

MARY ALICE JONES<sup>3</sup>

## 4. A Place to Pray

(Note: In the *International Journal of Religious Education*, November, 1959, is a picture of the prayer room at the United Nations which could be shown if the group is small.)

TALK: "A Place to Pray"

You all know that you can pray anywhere, but sometimes it is easier to talk with God in certain places. For example, some people feel closer to him when they enter the sanctuary of their church. Others have a special spot at home or in their gardens where they like to pray. This morning I want to tell you about a little prayer room in a big building.

Surely you know of the United Nations. Perhaps some of you have even been to the buildings in New York City and tried on the earphones over which you can hear one of five different languages: Chinese, English, French, Russian, or Spanish. Perhaps you have seen the gifts which represent many different people from many different countries around the world. Surely you know that the United Nations is not a museum to collect articles from various countries. It is a group of representatives from countries which want to live together peacefully in this world. These people spend many hours trying to talk out problems, trying to understand each other, and striving to find ways other

<sup>3</sup>Mary Alice Jones, *Tell Me About Prayer*, New York: Rand, McNally & Co., pp. 17-18.



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<sup>1</sup>Elizabeth B. Jones, *Round About Me*, Anderson, Indiana: The Warner Press, 1953.

<sup>2</sup>William L. Woodall, *100 Devotions for Boys and Girls*, New York: Association Press, 1957, p. 46.



than fighting to settle international difficulties.

When the buildings were being constructed, a group of men in our country were concerned because in the United Nations program there was no special spot in which to think of God. After much prayer and thought, they asked to have the use of one end of a hall. There they set aside a prayer room; it was dedicated in 1952 by Jewish, Protestant, and Roman Catholic laymen.

You might not recognize it as a prayer room, for there are none of the furnishings which you have grown accustomed to seeing in a church. You must remember that this room is for all people from many lands with many religions. Not all people use the Bible or a cross or even candlesticks. It was planned, then, as a place where all men could worship as they felt

they should. It is a very bare room, dimly lighted. The front wall is covered with a painting in triangles and curves that give a sense of freedom and harmony. In the middle of the room is a great block of iron ore, something that will last forever and never wear out. A shaft of light from the ceiling strikes the stone and makes it shine like marble. There is nothing else in the room but a few chairs. With nothing to distract attention, and no sound spoken, people in the room can meditate in silence.

Before we can have world peace, many tremendous problems have to be solved. Only through God's guidance and help can a lasting brotherhood of men come. We each can thank God for that little room for prayer and we each can pray that there the representatives of the United Nations will find his guidance.

## Junior Department

By Jean Hastings LOVEJOY\*

THEME FOR MARCH: *Alleluia! Christ Is Risen!*

### For the Leader

Easter follows Calvary. The power of the Resurrection is the power of God's love to transcend death. It would be untrue to the real meaning of Easter to celebrate its joy, even with boys and girls, if we did not consider at what cost the Resurrection was bought. Christ was put to death because this is the way the world treats the gift of God's love. Men sin by denying or turning away from this love. The cost of our restoration to God's love, or our redemption, is the willing sacrifice of his Son, Jesus Christ. But again, as in his forgiving us our sins, his love is great enough to transcend death. To deny this knowledge to children is to deny them a true understanding of eternal life, of what it means to be reborn, of what it means to be a Christian.

Therefore our first session deals with the fact of death as being a part of life. In order for us to enter into the fullness of life with God, our physical bodies must die, just as Jesus' body did. Somehow, if boys and girls can learn to accept death as part of life, and overcome the great injustice some adults do them in shielding them from all experience of death, we will be helping them to maturity. Therefore, it is suggested that the leader use the symbol of the brown, dead-looking bulb, keeping it watered and taking it each Sunday as it begins to put forth green shoots of new life.

In the second session we deal with the fact that Jesus gave up his life willingly to God's plan, even to suffering death, that we might know how great the love of God is. The third session shows the growth of the Christian Church stemming

from the belief in the Risen Christ. And for the last session before Easter, Alice Geer Kelsey's "Better Than the Rodeo" brings home the matter of learning to be a Christian; it shows how triumph on a human level can be hollow, and defeat on the same level the glorious beginning of growth into new life. We should not make self-denial, taking up a cross, sound like something that only heroes do. Jesus meant us to do it here and now. Bud, the hero of Mrs. Kelsey's story, found his conscience awakened by the example of great men like Kagawa. But he had to practice self-denial himself to experience the victory and joy of rebirth. Death to self is not easy for an adult; often we do not teach our children this deeper joy, the one which comes from the costly sacrifice of self. This is the meaning of Easter.

The suggested worship service in the first session may be used throughout the month, with a variation in Scripture passages. Always read all Scripture passages from the Bible itself. If you use a version other than the Revised Standard, have the boys and girls follow the passage in their own RSV Bibles. Clear understanding as well as the flow of the language is desirable.

The familiar Easter hymn, "Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!" by Charles Wesley, should be memorized (just the first stanza). A fuller expression of joy can be realized by all the worshipers if their whole beings are involved in praise. The antiphonal singing and rhythmic interpretation is offered as a way of praising God more fully for the inexplicable gift of his love in Jesus Christ and his transcendence over death.

### 1. Death Is Part of Life

(This order of service may be followed

throughout the month)

OPENING HYMN OF PRAISE: "Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!" (sung antiphonally with rhythmic interpretation suggested as follows:)

Girls: "Christ the Lord is risen today (Girls and boys stand in two lines making a v-shape, radiating from the worship center, each worshiper facing forward with eyes on a picture of the face of Christ)

Boys: "Alleluia!

Sons of men and angels say,"

Girls: "Alleluia!"

Unison: "Raise your joys and triumph high" (All raise arms to head height, extending them forward with palms up, turned as though in offering)

"Alleluia!" (Turn once in place with arms extended overhead)

Girls: "Sing ye heavens" (Arms at sides)

Boys: "And earth reply" (Arms at sides)

Unison: "Alleluia!" (Arms extended above head; turn once in place.)

SCRIPTURE: Jesus said, "I came that the ~~may~~ have life . . ." (John 10:10b.)

Read John 10:7-18, RSV or J. B. Phillips translation

MEDITATION: "Life Out of Death"

Most of us recognize that death is part of life when we take a dry-looking seed or bulb, put it into the ground, and give it water and sunlight. Life comes again in the form of a new plant from what appeared to be dead. God has planned a cycle of life for the seed or bulb; it dies that life may go on.

Why is it that we, as human creatures of God, fear death? Probably because we do not know what really happens to us when our bodies die. God has a plan for us, too. The part of us that loves that thinks, that worships God, and that wants to be a useful person doesn't die. This is not something one can prove, like putting hydrogen and oxygen together and making water. But we do know God's plan for Jesus Christ.

Let us think about this plan. God was in Christ—this is the greatest truth we Christians know. But Jesus was a man, a very real, human person, who succeeded in giving to the world a perfect expression of goodness and love. All that he did was good: he fed the hungry, healed the sick, and forgave the sinners. Yet the world rejected Jesus and put him to death on a cross, a punishment reserved for criminals. On the cross he suffered as any man would suffer. He died there, and was buried in a rock cave. And yet somehow, in a way which we do not understand, he was resurrected from death and lives today. Death for Jesus was part of his life as a man—for all men die—yet he overcame death and lives forever with God.

As God had a plan for Jesus which we can see, we believe that he has a plan for us too, and that death is not the final fact of life. Death does not stop God's love. Easter is the celebration of this belief—that Christ is triumphant over death, and that out of death comes life eternal and everlasting, the life with God.

PRAYER OF OFFERING AND DEDICATION:

We would give our gifts of money and learn to live our lives in constant gratitude for the love you have shown us in Jesus Christ. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: "Lord, I want to be a Christian"

\*Tunghai University, Taiwan.



## Jesus Gave His Life Willingly

Order of service as in session 1)

SCRIPTURE: Read Matthew 26: 36-42, RSV or J. B. Phillips translation

MEDITATION: "Not as I Will"

(The leader may wish to review for himself Philippians 2:5-13)

As Christians we believe that Jesus was born a man like us, and at the same time he was divine. He was as much God as he could possibly be and yet be limited by having the mind and body of a man. Jesus, being a man, suffered like men.

We read in the Gospel of Matthew that toward the end of Jesus' life, he realized that the people around him would never understand the purpose of his coming into the world while he was still with them. This purpose was to express God's love to all men. This love of God's could be stern to judge men; it could call them to repentance, to be sorry for their wrongdoings, and for being unfaithful to God's plan for them. This love could also heal the sick, comfort the lonely and sad, and rejoice with those who were happy. But Jesus seemed to be an enemy to those whose way of life was threatened; they did not want him to preach that God forgives the worst sinner.

Instead of running away from his enemies, Jesus went to Jerusalem to face them openly, in a last effort to help them to understand his mission. As a result they wanted more than ever to stop him. Jesus knew this meant death by the most cruel means they had. He would like to escape, not to have to drink the bitter cup of suffering of death on the cross. So he prayed to God the Father to let the cup pass from him untasted. Listening for God's answer, he said, "My Father . . . not as I will, but as thou wilt." So he gave his will into God's hands, knowing that God knew best.

The spirit of Christ is alive today. It is this spirit, willing to be surrendered to God's will, which enables men to build his church in every country of the world today.

## 3. He Is Risen!

Order of service as in session 1)

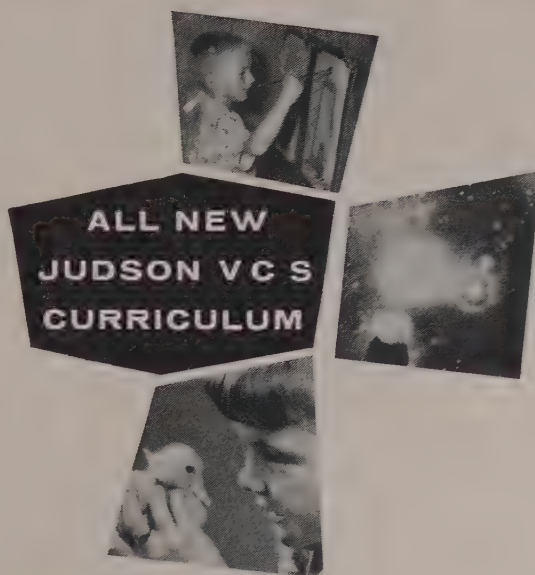
SCRIPTURE: "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46-47). Read Acts 4:32-35 (RSV).

MEDITATION: "They Knew Christ Lived!"

Easter means the assurance that Christ's way of life is triumphant and conquers all obstacles, even death itself. How can we be sure of this? We find evidence in the history of the beginnings of the Christian church.

The sure presence of Christ as a living spirit changed Peter from one who was ashamed of his Master into the missionary who preached and healed in Christ's name. The disciples were at first defeated by the events of the end of the last week of Christ's ministry—his betrayal, his trial, and his crucifixion. Even the resurrection seemed unreal to them until they had felt Christ's presence as real in their lives. Up until that time they hid themselves for fear of the same treatment given their Master; after the experience of knowing the power of the Holy Spirit, which Jesus had said he would send to comfort them,

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they went to the ends of the earth, suffering untold hardships, telling the good news about Jesus Christ.

The vision of the Risen Christ came to Stephen as he endured the terrible death by stoning, filling him with forgiveness for his tormentors. Saul, the learned Pharisee and persecutor of the early Christians, became Paul, the greatest missionary of them all, when he met the Risen Christ on the road to Damascus. We know that the first Christian churches could not have been started but for the certainty of these men, and of countless others whom we remember almost two thousand years after they lived, that Christ was with them. After Paul, you remember, came Augustine, Francis of Assisi, Martin Luther, and many more, including the Pilgrim Fathers and others who settled in America in order to have churches in which they could worship God. These men and women endured persecution and hardship, sure of Christ's presence and given strength by his example.

Albert Schweitzer, Toyohiko Kagawa, and Martin Luther King are well-known Christians in our day who carry on the work of healing and preaching and reconciling men to one another. A few months ago Jim Lawson, a young man who was studying to become a Christian minister, felt the need to do Christ's work by urging Negroes in Nashville, Tennessee, to right the wrongs done them, using non-violent action. For years, the white owners of stores had not permitted Negroes to eat with whites at the store lunch counters. These are the rules Jim and the "sit-inners" worked out for a peaceful yet determined way to accomplish their goal:

1. Don't strike back or curse if abused.

2. Don't laugh out.
3. Don't hold conversations with the floor walkers (employees).
4. Don't block the entrances to store and aisles.
5. Show yourself courteous and friendly at all times.
6. Sit straight and always face the (lunch) counter.
7. Remember love and non-violence.
8. May God bless each of you. (From the *New York Times*, March 2, 1960.)

In other words, these Christians went ahead with their action, but they did it in a friendly, courteous way, considerate of the store's need to carry on business; they refused to harbor hate for any ill-treatment they might receive.

Jim Lawson was expelled from his seminary on March 2, 1960, for having a part in this "sit-in" demonstration in Nashville, because he refused to give up his role as advisor to the demonstrators. Some of his teachers resigned in protest. Although Jim had to finish his work at another seminary, he made many people think hard about their attitudes toward Negroes.

The Christian Church is the spirit of Christ at work in the world. It is the fellowship of those who constantly give up their selfish will through surrender to God's will. Such persons have represented the best in this Church for two thousand years. Christians could not have persuaded others to join the church if they themselves had not had a real experience of the living Christ.

#### 4. Triumph Through Defeat

(Order of service as in session 1)

SCRIPTURE: Jesus said, "If any man would

come after me, let him deny himself . . ." (Luke 9:23a) Read Luke 9:22-24 (RSV).

STORY:

#### BETTER THAN THE RODEO<sup>1</sup>

Bud pulled up with a flourish in front of his row of friends sitting on the top rail of the corral fence. His buckskin quarter horse dug her sharp hoofs in the soft soil and switched her long black tail.

"Only two weeks till the rodeo," cried Bud.

"Think you'll win first place?" "I'm sure of it!" bragged Bud. "Dawn can turn on a dime. She stands when I leave her with the reins on the ground. She starts like a flash. Her jumping is so good yet, but I've got two whole weeks to work on that. And am I working?"

Bud was off again, tearing up the pasture to the low hurdle on which he was jumping Dawn. The boys rolled from the fence and started off on other play—all except Jake, the boy from the city who was visiting Bud's cousins for a month.

Jake was not like any boy Bud had known. He had been sent by a social agency in the city in the hope that a month in the country would straighten him out. In the two weeks he had a ready spent on the ranch, Jake had not shown much desire to play with the other boys. He was sullen and silent. He did not go on hikes or join in games. The only time he seemed interested in anything was when he could watch Bud and Dawn.

Jake was still on the fence when Bud tore down the pasture again with Dawn, pacing her prettiest.

"Ever ride horseback?" called Bud. Jake shook his head.

"Like to try?" Bud asked before he thought what he was saying. As though he had time to let anyone else ride Dawn with the rodeo only two weeks away and Dawn not jumping well yet!

"Sure, I'd like to try!" Jake smiled the first smile Bud had seen.

"Wish I could let you ride now." Bud stumbled for the right way out of his mistake. "After the rodeo I'll teach you to ride."

Jake's smile disappeared. It left his face more glum than before. "I'll be back in the city by then."

Bud rode off toward the hurdle at the other end of the field. Dawn jumped better than before, but Bud did not feel the thrill he usually did over a good jump. He kept remembering how that smile flashed and disappeared on Jake's sullen face.

Jake was not on the corral fence when Bud went back, after giving Dawn her rub down at the end of the ride. He was not there the next day, or the next. Bud told himself it was a relief not to have Jake sitting on the fence.

As the days went by it seemed as though everything conspired against Bud, though really it was just his conscience waking up. His mother read from the newspaper about a boy who had given his favorite puppy to comfort a sick girl. On Sunday the minister told a story about a Japanese man, Toyohiko Kagawa, who had left a comfortable home and given up everything in order to help people in the slums of his city. Then, in Bud's class the memory verse was, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself." The teacher talked a lot about what it meant to deny oneself. Bud kept remembering that smile that came and went so quickly on Jake's face when he thought for half a minute that he was going to ride Dawn.

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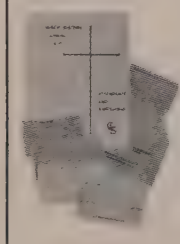
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A boy could stand just so much! That afternoon Bud saddled Dawn. Instead of riding to the hurdles, he trotted past Jake's house.

"Come on out, Jake," he called. "I'll give you a riding lesson on Dawn."

"Has she learned to clear the hurdles?" Jake stood in the door uncertainly. He was not wasting a smile yet.

"I've given up trying to teach her this

year," said Bud, swallowing hard. He tried to make the next words sound as though he meant them. "She can enter the jumping in next year's rodeo. She'll be better then. But you may not be here to learn to ride another year."

Then Jake's smile returned—for keeps.

<sup>3</sup>By Alice Geer Kelsey in *We Belong*. Copyright by Pilgrim Press, 1951.

# Junior High Department

by Mary E. HUEY\*

THEME FOR MARCH:

*We Would See Jesus*

## To the Leader

The familiar hymn "We would see Jesus" is the theme of our worship services this month as we approach the observance of Holy Week and Easter. The hymn takes its title from John 12:21 (KJV) in which John writes of some Greeks who inquire of Philip, "Sir, we would see Jesus." This same phrase is inscribed on the back of many pulpits where it reminds each preacher of the longing in the hearts of people really to know Jesus. There have doubtless been thousands of worship services based on this theme. But it still remains a challenge to all Christians—really to see Jesus, to grow in understanding of what he is like, and to change our lives accordingly. Like many familiar phrases, "We would see Jesus" stands in danger of losing its meaning for us because it is so familiar. Our ever-present challenge is to make Jesus real to teen-agers—to remove from their minds the all-too-often stereotyped idea of a kind, gentle, meek Man who was always good, always nice, always kind to children. This kind of Jesus has little relation to their everyday lives, their growing eagerness for status and recognition, their problems at school and home, and their expanding social life. Let us in these weeks try to help our junior highs get a clearer picture of him who was good, yet chose to walk the earth as a man; who was "tempted like as we are"; who chose the hard right rather than the easy wrong; who knew disappointment, sorrow, and loneliness and can show us the way out of them; who gave us an unforgettable example of a completely unselfish life; who was willing to die to show his love for all men everywhere.

The weekly themes are based on phrases from the various stanzas of the hymn "We would see Jesus." It is hoped that the junior highs may become increasingly familiar with the hymn through its use during the month, and that the last line, "For we are thine, we give ourselves to thee!" may have real significance to each of them.

This month may be a good time to consider what ideas of Jesus young people are getting from the pictures they see of him. What pictures of Jesus hang in our junior high departments? Old, faded, dusty prints? Prettified pictures that make him look too saintly or too gentle? Someone referred to one of the portraits of Christ as a "bearded Horatio Alger." While tastes in art vary widely, just as tastes in music and the other fine arts vary, do we not have an obligation to provide the best possible pictures and music in our church schools? The Dutch master, Rembrandt, has painted thoughtful heads of Christ. Many denominational bookstores carry the paintings of Barosin, a modern artist who has given us an idea of Christ that is more vigorous than some. Perhaps a committee of junior highs could be appointed to investigate a number of different portrayals of Christ and, with wise guidance, choose one for the department.

## 1. "Through every task most lowly"

OPENING PRAYER:

Great art thou, O Lord, and greatly to be praised; great is thy power, and thy wisdom is infinite. We would praise thee without ceasing. Thou callest us to delight in thy praise, for thou hast made us for thyself, and our hearts are restless until we rest in thee. Amen. (St. Augustine)

HYMN: "We would see Jesus," stanzas 1 and 2

SCRIPTURE:

One of the hardest things for Jesus' followers to understand was that he had come to live a life of service. Instead of being a king who expected to have servants, slaves, messengers, and courtiers carry out his every command, he was a King who pointed out that the greatest thing in the world is to serve others. He proved it by his willingness to be of service in the humblest ways. It was hard for the disciples to understand this. It is hard for us to understand too.

Reader One: "Whoever would be first among you must be slave of all." (Mark 10:44)

Reader Two: "A dispute also arose among them, which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. And he said to them . . . 'let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves.'" (Luke 22:24, 25a, 26b)

Reader Three: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half-dead. . . . a priest was going down that road . . . he passed by on the other side. . . . But a Samaritan . . . went to him and bound up his wounds . . . and brought him to an inn, and took care of him." (Selections from Luke 10:30-34)

Reader Four: "Jesus . . . rose from supper, laid aside his garments, and girded himself with a towel. Then he poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet." (John 13: 3a, 4, 5a)

TALK: "A Little Light"

Jean Kenyon MacKenzie, who spent ten years as a missionary in Africa, in one of her writings<sup>1</sup> told of a little African boy named Minla who carried her lantern through the thick blackness of the forests at night. Minla was not very big, but he longed to carry a real load like the big men who were carriers, sometimes as many as fifty of them in a long procession along the jungle trails. "Even if I cannot carry a real load," he told Miss MacKenzie, "I can carry a lantern, and surely you will be needing one." So Minla with his little light became a lamp to the feet of many travelers who were abroad in the night.

Christians of all ages and in all times have tried to follow Christ's example in being of service in even the smallest ways. A number of years ago the great Japanese Christian, Toyohiko Kagawa, was traveling by train on a lecture tour in the United States. It was almost time for the train to arrive at the next station, and the others in the group looked about for Kagawa. Coats, hats, and baggage were gathered, but no Kagawa was in sight. Then one member of the party went to the washroom, and there he found Kagawa patiently scrubbing out the washbowl. Though it had been discolored by soot and grime and the carelessness of many who had washed their hands and left it dirty, the washbowl was soon white and immaculate because the most famous man on the train that day had taken the time to perform a humble task.

HYMN: "We would see Jesus," stanza 2  
PRAYER

## 2. "On the mountain teaching"

CALL TO WORSHIP: Psalm 25:4, 5

HYMN: "We would see Jesus," stanzas 1, 2, and 3

STORY: "Two Swords"

"Shimeta!" exclaimed the grandfather of Joseph Hardy Nishihama when his little grandson was born. This is much the same in Japanese as our "Hurrah!" in English. Well might Grandfather rejoice, for he already had four granddaughters, and girls, according to ancient Japanese tradition, did not count. It was a great day in the Nishihama family, and Shimeta—"Hurrah!"—became the name by which the little boy was known.

<sup>1</sup>*Glowing Ember*, Selections from the writings of Jean Kenyon MacKenzie. Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations, United Presbyterian Church in the USA.

\*Associate Director of Christian Education, Pasadena Presbyterian Church, Pasadena, California.



Five years later came another great day. Among the important birthday presents Shimeta received on his fifth birthday were a silk suit cut just like his father's, a new kite, and two little swords made just like the swords his father and grandfather wore. The two swords became his most precious treasures, and he decided he would never part from them. He knew exactly what they were for. One was long and sharp and was to be used to fight enemies. The short one had only one purpose—rather than suffer dishonor, you used this sword to kill yourself.

As Shimeta grew older his ideas about life began to change. He had been taught that only Japan and China were civilized nations, and that all other countries were barbaric. But strange rumors began to come to Shimeta that the barbarians knew many things the Japanese did not know. He learned to read Dutch, and began to discover secrets of engineering and mathematics and navigation that seemed like magic to him. When he read translations of books written in America he was even more astounded. He read of a strange new Jesus doctrine and of an unseen Father who had created the world.

In Shimeta's heart grew a desire to learn "everything that was to be known—everything in the world." And an even more dangerous thought came to him: why not visit America and learn more of these strange new secrets? He had seen much misery and wickedness in the towns he had visited in Japan. Surely his beloved country needed to learn new ways. Now at that time no Japanese could leave his native land; the penalty for doing so was death. But even this did not deter

the eager young student. With the help of friends he was smuggled aboard an American ship sailing for China, and from there to another ship, the *Wild Rover*, bound for the United States. As part payment for his passage he gave up his greatest treasure—his long sword. The rest of the payment he earned as cabin boy on the ship. When the ship stopped in Hong Kong, Shimeta went ashore and found there the one thing he was determined to own—a Chinese translation of the New Testament. For this he gave his last treasure: his short sword. But the Book would be a greater treasure still.

A whole new world opened to Shimeta when the *Wild Rover* finally arrived in Boston harbor, a year after leaving China. The owner of the ship, Mr. Hardy, took an interest in the Japanese lad and assisted him in getting an education. And on his twenty-third birthday in Boston he was baptized into the Christian church with a new name: Joseph Hardy Niishima.

It was his determined purpose to return to Japan as an ordained minister, even though the Christian religion was still outlawed in Japan. He knew of the hunger for knowledge in the hearts of many young Japanese who felt as he did the urge to learn, to know all there was to know, to understand new things. He held to his purpose through many discouragements; finally upon his return to Japan, he received permission to build a school in Kyoto. Even with this permission he could not find land on which to build. Many a time he received a polite refusal: "Our unworthy land is not suitable for your honorable college." But eventually even this problem was solved, and in the

fall of 1875 Doshisha University opened with eight students. In the years since that day, thousands and thousands of Japanese students have had a chance for an education because Joseph Hardy Niishima, honorable son of a long line of honorable Japanese warriors, exchanged his two swords for the sword of truth and the sword of love.<sup>2</sup>

#### PRAYER:

Our Father in heaven, we thank thee for the great gift of thy Son Jesus, the great Teacher. We are grateful that he is for us the Life, the Truth, the Way. May we listen to his words, as men through all the ages have done, and may we help to bring to others his message of love and truth for all men everywhere. Amen.

### 3. "In his work of healing"

#### CALL TO WORSHIP:

Light of the lonely pilgrim's heart,  
Star of the coming day,  
Arise, and with Thy morning beams  
Chase all our griefs away.

EDWARD DENNY, 1842

HYMN: "We would see Jesus," stanzas

1, 2, 3, 4

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 4:23-25

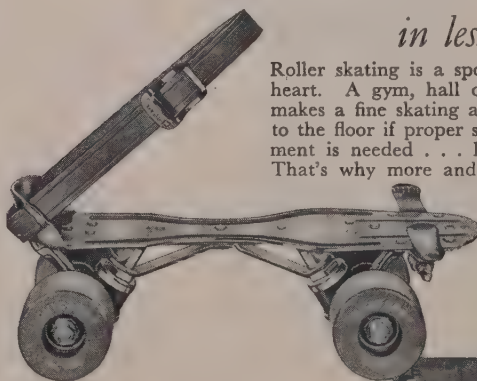
STORY: "Naz-bah and the Iron Lung"<sup>3</sup>

Naz-bah Lee was a seven-year-old Navaho, living out her life in a remote hogan. She was charming to look at, with well-

<sup>2</sup>Based on *Two Swords* by L. H. Dalton, Eagle Book, No. 32, Friendship Press, New York.

# ROLLER SKATING

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ded features, lustrous eyes, and a  
ud bearing. In her velveteen blouse  
l long skirt she made a better picture  
n she could have made in any other  
tume, but in the accident that befell  
the voluminous skirt came near prov-  
the end of Naz-bah.

The account of her accident says that  
"fell across a log in the corral."  
body knows just what happened. Per-  
s she climbed up to watch her inti-  
tes, the sheep and lambs, and caught  
foot in the clinging folds of her skirt.  
bably she fell on the end of one of  
logs or saplings set vertically in a close  
ele.

Falls were common. Pain was common,  
d to be accepted with little complaint.  
t Naz-bah's parents soon saw that this  
rt was not of the usual kind. Naz-bah  
ped for breath, clutching at her breast-  
e with little brown hands. The color  
ined from her face, leaving it the  
enish gray of wet clay.

A medicine man was called, but he soon  
y that the injury was beyond his healing  
wer. Naz-bah was rushed to the hos-  
al at Ganado.

There Dr. Salsbury's examination dis-  
sed an injury to a vital nerve, and  
alysis of the diaphragm. Breathing,  
mally involuntary, could go on only  
the child's willed action. That meant  
t sleep, stopping the willed action,  
uld also stop the breath and life. The  
ctor, the nurses, and Naz-bah began a  
g battle.

For the first fifteen hours the child was  
en manual respiration without pause.  
Manual perspiration" someone on the  
npus called it. Meantime a crude box  
d been rigged up and fitted over the  
ld's body, with a homemade rubber  
phragm. Dr. Salsbury, two Indian  
rses, and a white nurse took turns  
erating this diaphragm by hand.  
But it wouldn't do, Dr. Salsbury said.  
makeshift was too inefficient. Ganado  
spital had nothing better. Even city  
spitals down at the railroad lacked an  
n lung. The nearest one was in Phoe-  
e, across four hundred miles of desert  
d mountain.

Ganado campus is often the scene of  
nsiderable commercial activity. Trucks  
g in with supplies for the commissary,  
the dining hall, for the hospital. Alst  
directly across the highway from the  
pital is the Lee Trading Post, with  
cks often unloading supplies. A lot of  
truckers were on friendly terms with  
Big Doctor.

Now, as he tried to figure out a way  
bring the big, heavy iron lung from  
oenix in time to save the exhausted  
z-bah, Dr. Salsbury approached two  
ckers, Albert and Golden Farr. The

region was buzzing with Naz-bah's story,  
and the truckers asked the doctor how  
the kid was coming along.

He shook his big head brusquely. "She  
can't make it without an iron lung, and  
the nearest iron lung might just as well  
be at the moon."

"Well, gosh, can't you send somebody  
after it?"

The doctor shook his head again. "We  
don't own a truck that could do it in time.  
Not over these roads."

"Seems as if there ought to be some-  
one . . .," one of the brothers said, glanc-  
ing uneasily at their own big truck.

"We-ell," the doctor drawled, "I don't  
know that you can blame them. Eight  
hundred miles there and back, over these  
so-called roads. And no good if they don't  
make it in twenty-four hours. It isn't  
as if Naz-bah were a white kid," he added.

The Farr brothers stared. This didn't  
sound like the Big Doctor. His eyes  
could curtain themselves like an Indian's,  
and they told no tales now. One of the  
Farr brothers kicked a truck tire and the  
other muttered explosively.

"White kid or not," he said, "we're on  
our way now. Be looking for us."

"You mean you'll fetch that seven-  
hundred-pound respirator in twenty-four  
hours? Over these roads?"

"Got no time to waste chinnin'," one of  
the Farris growled. "Got to get fixed and  
get goin'."

Dr. Salsbury's head went back in his  
characteristic laugh, and he slapped the  
nearest shoulder with a mighty hand.  
Then he went back to Naz-bah and the  
manual perspiration.

The Farr brothers' story can be pieced  
together only by guess, and from the few  
details they have given, and an acquaint-  
ance with the highways. Over the desert,  
through pine forests, and then by winding,  
climbing, zigzag roads through the moun-  
tains. No more majestic canyon rides can  
be found than here in Central Arizona:  
dizzy heights and depths, chromatic rock  
ramparts, massed greenery, foaming tor-  
rents. They lose charm when taken at  
full speed in the dark. Whirling around  
the hairpin curves, hardly able, at high  
speed, to hug the cliff wall for safety, eyes  
probing the night for an approaching  
glow that headlights might send around  
a bend—one driving and the other nap-  
ing—day coming, and a hurried stop to  
gulp down hot coffee and grab a ham-  
burger, which could be eaten with one  
hand on the wheel—

Phoenix at last. The hospital. The  
seven-hundred-pound iron lung stowed  
into the Farr truck. The brothers check-  
ing their truck, tires, motor, gas, oil,  
water; gulping down coffee, bolting food;  
starting back.

Through the palm trees of Phoenix.  
Through the Joshua trees and barrel  
cactus north of it. Into the mountains.

Here the truck broke step, coughed,  
stopped.

Working grimly with that engine, trying  
everything they had learned through years  
of experience, coming up from under, gray  
beneath the stubble and sweat and grease,  
eyes red-rimmed. No good. The trouble  
was beyond them. One of them hopped  
a Phoenix-bound car, commandeered an-  
other truck in the city, rode back to his  
brother. They transferred the respirator  
from the disabled truck and went on.

In the meantime the nurses and Dr.  
Salsbury kept working the homemade re-  
spirator. Windows grew dim with night  
and great white lights flashed on. Win-  
dows grew gray with dawn and great  
white lights paled. Naz-bah's heavy eyes  
begged, "Let me sleep. Let me sleep."

The telegraph had flashed the story over  
the desert. At once it was in the head-  
lines. The radio spread it still farther.  
The world was pulling for Naz-bah, the  
Farr brothers, and Ganado.

Twenty-three hours from the time they  
left the mission, Albert and Golden Farr  
drew up before the hospital and tumbled  
out. The staff crowded around them,  
unloaded the iron lung, and rushed it  
inside.

"Now she can go to town," one of the  
Farris muttered, rubbing an unsteady hand  
across his whiskers.

Naz-bah was speedily transferred to the  
big machine, and the "juice was turned  
on." Almost before it had gone to work,  
the child was asleep.

The world's interest continued high,  
and so did the interest of the Ganado  
district. Medicine men came and stood  
gazing with professional respect at the  
mechanism. One had with him his buck-  
skin medicine bag. Gravely he scattered  
sacred meal and corn pollen on the re-  
spirator, invoking red North, blue South,  
yellow West, black East, zenith and nadir.  
He would join forces with this mystery,  
for it was *Belliganeh* (American) medi-  
cine, and powerful.

A few at a time, other Navahos were  
allowed to come in and view this strange  
contraption, with Naz-bah's head sticking  
out at one end. Around her were grouped  
some of the dolls that had come from  
unknown *Belliganeh* who had been read-  
ing and hearing about her.

Naz-bah made a complete recovery.  
When newspaper, radio, and movie pub-  
licity began to bring wires of congratula-  
tions to Dr. Salsbury on the outcome, he  
shook his head. "These," he said, "belong  
to Albert and Golden Farr."

#### PRAYER:

Our Father, we thank thee that down  
through the ages doctors and nurses and  
others have brought healing and help to  
those who are ill. We thank thee for  
their self-forgetfulness and their eagerness  
to help all those who are suffering. We  
are grateful for the example of Jesus, the  
great Physician, who made the blind to  
see and the lame to walk and never  
turned aside from those who needed his  
comfort and help. Show us ways in which  
we may be of help to those around us,  
not just to our own families or best friends,  
but to anyone who needs help. In the  
name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

#### 4. "Sir, we wish to see Jesus"

##### CALL TO WORSHIP:

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates,  
Behold the King of glory waits.  
The King of kings is drawing near;  
The Saviour of the world is here! (Rev.  
George Weissel, 1642)

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HYMN: "We would see Jesus," all five stanzas

SCRIPTURE: Mark 11:1-11; John 12:20, 21

TALK: "Who Is This Man?"

Many people were crowded into Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. When Jesus rode into the city they lined the streets and cheered as he came by. Some of the Pharisees were doubtless there among the throng, observing what was happening. They saw the enthusiasm of the crowd as the people spread their coats and the branches of trees on the road and shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!"

"We do not need to worry about him," some of the Pharisees may have said. "He has no real power. If he were really a king he would certainly not come riding into the city on an insignificant little brown donkey. Now if he were to come on a magnificent white horse with silver trappings, that would be something else again. And if he had an army of men carrying spears flashing in the sun, we might have need for concern. But here are no spears—only branches of myrtle and willow and palm fronds. Yes, the people are shouting his praises, but what are they? The voices and songs of children, not the battle songs of a mighty troop of soldiers. We have nothing to fear from him."

Yet the fact remained that the throngs were shouting his name and joyously singing his praises as he entered the city. And the writer of the Gospel of John says that some Greeks who were then in Jerusalem came to Philip, one of the disciples, and said, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Even those who were not Jews were impressed by him and wanted a chance to meet him.

Many of the scribes and Pharisees could not help being concerned at the apparent popularity of this leader, and they said to one another, "The world has gone after him."

How quickly the mood of the people changed! In a few short days all had deserted him. But on this day of rejoicing many were looking to Jesus with hope and anticipation and seeking a chance to see him.

What do we see when we look at Jesus? Do we see, as many people did in that day, a kind of magician who will heal our diseases and work miracles?

Do we see him, as did the Pharisees, as one who threatens to overthrow the comfortable practices of our lives?

Do we see him, as did the Greeks, as an interesting man who seemed to have some unusual ideas we'd like to discuss with him?

Who is Jesus?

What difference does it make to my life that Jesus lived and died and rose again?

What changes will I make in my life this week because of what Jesus said and did?

PRAYER:

O God, whose dearly beloved Son was greeted by the crowd on Olivet with hallelujahs, but in that same week was mocked as he went lonely to the cross, forbid that our welcome to him should be in words alone. Help us, we beseech thee, to keep the road open for him into our hearts; and let him find there not another crucifixion, but love and loyalty in which his kingdom may be established evermore. Amen.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>From *Lift Up Your Hearts* by Walter Russell Bowie. © 1939, 1956 by Pierce & Washabaugh. By permission of Abingdon Press.

# Senior High and Young People's Departments

by Clarice M. BOWMAN\*

THEME FOR MARCH:

*And the Almighty will be thy treasure . . .* (Job 22:25, A.S.V.)

## For the Worship Committee

Is there a "hidden hunger" in your group? Immediately you will say, "Yes, the hunger that is in all of us, for fuller fellowship with the living God." That's the big hunger, true. But a part of it may be a hunger for hints, aids, and ideas as to how to worship and pray more truly. "I try," said one, "but soon my mind wanders off and nothing seems to happen." "I don't always understand what I'm supposed to do," said another. "I wish prayer meant more to me," said another.

As the Worship Committee, in addition to planning for scheduled services, you might ask for some informal occasions when the whole group can *talk over together*: (1) what worship means; (2) our expectations as we come, and possibly God's expectations of us; (3) how we may prepare and in what attitude we may come; (4) ways our worship relates to every aspect of our daily living and even thinking.

The following suggested rules for worship apply not only to participation in the congregational service, but also to youth-planned devotions:

### RULES FOR WORSHIP

I. Worship begins as I close the door to my home. On my way, I pray for my church, for the minister, and for those who worship far and near.

II. Before I enter the House of God, I pause a moment that I may cast off and leave outside all things and thoughts unbecoming a child of my Heavenly Father: hates, grudges, frettings, worldly cares, and sinful thoughts.

III. The moment I enter the door of this sacred house, I cease all conversation. I come in silence, for great things arise out of quietness and minister to me and to those about me.

IV. As soon as I am seated, I bow my head in prayer. I pray for others as well as for myself. I pray for my church and its great causes. I ask God to be near me now.

V. I join in the singing of hymns and bow my head during the Amen. I think about the words of the sermon and let their meaning and spirit go down to the roots of my soul.

VI. As I lay my offering on the plate, I say a prayer of thanks for my money and ask God's blessing on its use here and in the uttermost parts of the earth.

VII. Throughout the service, I think of God objectively. As power, peace, strength, love, He is all I need for life as it should be.

VIII. I listen as the minister preaches from God's Word, and I seek to apply his message to my life. I pray for him as he preaches.

IX. When the service has ended, in Christian friendliness I speak to those whom I know and also to those who are strangers to me.

RAYMOND SMITH

And now, as you plan, may God go with you. Great-hearts! Your purpose and prayer is so to get the room and all its visual helps ready, so to prepare yourselves as participants, that the holy moment of God-centering may come. At times it may be as a mighty wind, and you go forth nerved with conviction that, "having done all," you may *stand*. At times it may be as a sting of conscience, disturbing you until you search your spirits and make confession of your sins at a deeper level than before. At times it may be as a tap on your shoulder for a task, small or great, near or far. No excuses suffice; the Mighty One says to us as to Jeremiah, "Do not say, 'I am only a youth.'"

The central thought for this month is making God our treasure, our utmost quest; to turn from our self-concern (see No. 1), to seek guidance through trivial things of every day (see No. 2) and in larger callings (see No. 3), and to let his joy be in us and known through us (see No. 4). None of these aids is arranged in "order"; these are seed-thoughts, sparks struck off from others' awareness. Use them sparingly, and let whatever is used be *meant* from the heart. And as the Spirit moves you, write, speak, sing, paint, or dramatize ideas beyond any of those printed here.

1. ". . . a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Hebrews 10:31)

CALLS, from Scripture: Job 11:7; Psalm 100:3-5; I John 4:12-16.

PRAYER-CALL:

O God of grace, who hast called us to thine eternal glory in Christ our Lord; we praise and bless thy glorious name.

To see thee is to find meaning in life. To obtain thy forgiveness is healing and peace.

To be thy servant is perfect freedom. To meditate upon thy purpose and power is enduring hope.

\*Assistant Professor of Religion, High Point College, High Point, North Carolina.

<sup>1</sup>In *North Carolina Christian Advocate*, July 21, 1960. Used by permission.



To love and trust thee is to face life  
and death unafraid.

O heavenly Father, whom to know is  
the eternal; in thy great mercy open our  
eyes to thy glory and incline our hearts to  
thy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
men.

ERNEST FREMONT TITTLE<sup>2</sup>

HYMNS of decisiveness: "Once to every  
man and nation," "There's a voice in  
the wilderness crying," "Make me a cap-  
tive, Lord," "Lord, in the strength of  
grace," "No, not despairingly," "Not  
in dumb resignation."

\* \* \* \*

#### OUR CHAOTIC TIMES

The earth is the Lord's and its fulness.  
The world, and those who dwell therein.  
(Psalm 24:1.)

We open the papers.  
The headlines are in a sullen mood.  
They shout their words of pain and want.  
They scream the trivialities of suffering,  
Of wrecks, and wrongs, and war.  
We read of atomic bombs.  
We read of mass movements of men in  
struggle.

We read the ravings of enraged statesmen.  
We read of lawsuits and divorces.  
And tragedy becomes commonplace,  
The unusual the usual.

Life seems but a wild flailing  
In the turbulences of a maelstrom.  
"God!" we cry, "is there any meaning  
in it all?"

But through the winds and earthquakes  
and flames

Of anguished times,  
There comes as a whisper,  
A soft and soothing sound.

"The earth is the Lord's!"  
And wrecks and wars and sorrow  
All vanish in the "still waters"  
Which some call Faith.

Perhaps man's extremity is God's op-  
portunity. Maybe when all human props  
are knocked out we will find our reliance  
on God alone.

Father, in darkness give us the inner  
light. Amen.

EDWARD FARLEY<sup>3</sup>

\* \* \* \*

#### TWO FACED BY NATURE

Men can face two ways—  
The same man—

Toward war, toward peace,  
Toward darkness, toward light.

His possible power  
Can destroy or build.

The key to the use of his power  
is in which way he looks.

When he sets his face,  
He lines up his life,

He disciplines his body and soul.  
And he moves ahead.

The measure of his world of tomorrow  
is inside himself.<sup>4</sup>

TALK: "Turning Godward"

We are made to turn bravely Godward,  
in humility that turns to joy. For only by  
loosing—letting loose—our tight hold on  
self-interest, in the greater ocean of God's

love and the magnificence of his plan, do  
we "find" ourselves, as by-product and sur-  
prise.

In a large auditorium a great conference  
of young people was assembled and Roland  
Hayes had sung in glorious concert. The  
audience of young, enthusiastic listeners  
broke loose in applause and requests, with  
voices shouting, "Sing, 'Old Man River'!"  
The shouts and applause died down as Mr.  
Hayes raised his hand for attention. Then  
he quietly said, "No, I will not sing 'Old  
Man River,' but rather I choose to sing  
of One greater than he." Then with  
bowed head, slowly lifting, he began to  
sing: "Were you there when they crucified  
my Lord?" And over the vast audience  
came a deep listening silence and awe . . .  
"Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble  
. . ."

#### PRAYER:

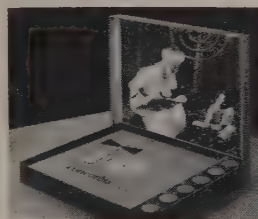
"Keep alive in me, O Father, the mo-  
ment of my high resolve. 'Tis so easy for  
me to declare myself, but also it is so easy  
for me to decline myself from the act to  
which commitment has so freely been given.  
I had said to myself: 'No more of petti-  
ness, raw spot sensitivities, foolish pride  
and envy, and pre-occupation with self  
and kind.' Then, in the marketplace of  
daily association I forgot and the old  
drama smoothly reenacted itself—I felt  
envious and sensitive and self-concerned,  
alone. O Great Spirit, help me to see

<sup>2</sup>From chapel service in Lawless Memorial  
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## "ALL THY CHILDREN SHALL BE TAUGHT"

isaiah 54:13



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<sup>2</sup>By Edward Farley (Kentucky) in *Power*, May  
8, 1951. Used by permission of National Con-  
ference of Methodist Youth.

<sup>3</sup>Frontispiece in *Power*, Fall, 1950, Vol. 8,  
No. 1. See note 3.



# YOUTH DIRECTORS

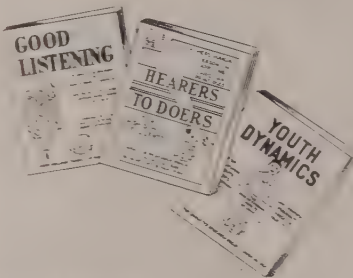
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that true greatness is always an inner  
quality that goes beyond the limits of self,  
alone."<sup>3</sup>

2. "... a great work, and I cannot  
come down." (Nehemiah 6:3a)

CALL (may be sung to the tune *Old  
Hundredth*, adding the last stanza, which  
is our familiar Doxology):

Awake, my soul, and with the sun  
The daily stage of duty run:  
Shake off dull sloth, and joyful rise  
To pay thy morning sacrifice.

Lord, I my vows to Thee renew;  
Disperse my sins as morning dew;  
Guard my first springs of thought and  
will,  
And with Thyself my spirit fill.

Direct, control, suggest this day,  
All I design, or do, or say;  
That all my powers, with all their might,  
In Thy sole glory may unite.

THOMAS KEN, 1709

\* \* \* \*

TALK: "Small, But Powerful"

In James 3:5 (KJV) are the words:  
"Behold, how great a matter a little fire  
kindleth." In the press a few weeks ago  
was a story of a "tragic trifle." A thirteen-  
year-old boy threw a cigarette stub into a  
pile of trash in a California forest. The  
result was a roaring inferno which burned  
for eight days over 45,000 acres, costing  
at least two and a half million dollars in  
destroyed timber and watershed protection.  
An army of 5,000 men fought until they  
were exhausted and blackened with smoke  
and burning embers. In confession, the  
boy said, "I did not think it would do  
any damage."

For most of us it is not the heart-rend-  
ing tragedies that lay waste life, but the  
tiny exasperations day by day: not the  
lightning's flash, not the tornado's terror,  
not the flood's torrent, but sharp words,  
fussy attitudes, little quarrels. Tragic trifles  
unnoticed grow large and uncontrolled in  
human affairs, leaving misery and ruin in  
their wake. The first social drink may be  
the beginning of a road to ruin, a broken  
home, a degraded family, a smeared repu-  
tation, possibly accidents and hurt—and,  
in turn, an influence for the worse upon  
countless numbers of others. "Life's desti-  
nies turn on trifles," said Michelangelo.

A youth caught in a post office robbery  
was asked by his pastor how he fell into  
such a way. "I stole a handful of pen-  
nies from a teacher's desk when I was in  
the first grade, and nobody noticed it. I  
began to steal larger things as the years  
went by—to break into stores, houses,  
offices. Had I been caught and punished  
for those pennies long ago, maybe I would  
not be on the way to prison today."

We may say, "I usually choose the right  
in the big, important problems of life."  
What about the little daily conversations?  
the temptation to speak just one little  
word of disparagement of someone? the  
frittering away of precious minutes of  
time? the secretly harbored prejudices? the  
"tragic trifles"?

Nehemiah set himself and his company  
to what looked like an impossible task, a  
great task. He planned well. What is  
more, when tempted to pause he answered  
with iron will, "I am doing a great work  
and I cannot come down."

\* \* \* \*

THREE SINS

Dear God, we pray forgiveness for  
The sins we did commit

Throughout this day and for the deeds  
Of good we did omit.

Please keep our hearts from secret sins,  
Those faults we do not see,  
That, hidden, grow and keep our souls  
From thine eternity.

ONA ROBERTS WRIGHT

\* \* \* \*

LET US SHARE OUR BROTHER'S BURDEN

Every time you sit down to eat a meal  
without a thought, word, or act of bless-  
ing for those who are without food, you  
are a partner in sin. Every day that you  
accept comfortable living without making  
protest or offering prayers . . . regarding  
tyrants, criminals, and wars, you are a co-  
creator of those criminals and those wars.  
Every time you hold prejudice or contempt  
toward any race or class or nation, you  
are planting seeds of death and decay.  
Every time you harbor anger and resent-  
ment in your heart toward any living crea-  
ture, you are pouring into the pure air  
about you poisons that will infect mil-  
lions. . . . Take upon your shoulders the  
world's vast crime of indifference, inert-  
ness, and selfish complacency, and kneel to re-  
pent for all. Jesus, who committed no sin  
or folly, will bless you for sharing the sin  
of the world and lifting them up to Him.

GLENN CLARK

\* \* \* \*

MY HEART CRIES OUT

Stars,  
Moon,  
Drapes of black are spread across the  
Evening skies,  
And silence is beckoned into rest—  
But yet my heart cries out with pain for  
that which I left undone,  
When all my expectations could have  
brought me peace!  
I left it undone and now it is too late!  
Why must darkness come too soon?

ABEL DILLARD HIATT

3. "as . . . with Moses, so I will be  
with you." (Joshua 1:5b)

ASCRPTION: "Thine, O Lord, is the great-  
ness, and the power, and the glory, and  
the victory, and the majesty; for all this  
is in the heavens and in the earth is  
thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord."  
(I Chronicles 29:11)

NO MATTER WHERE YOU LOOK

It's the same God, wherever you find  
him—

In the majesty and enthusiasm of the  
first Sunday morning hymn—

In the bond of closeness with him and  
with friends united with you in quiet de-  
votions—

In the inspiration of the sunset, the  
trees against the sky, the refreshing rain,  
the clear mountain air—

In the loving biplay of a friend—

In the triumphant Psalms, the Biblical  
stories of courage and devotion, the words  
and actions of Jesus—

In the friendly "good morning" as you  
pass another on the street—

\*Ona Roberts Wright, Gainesville, Texas, in  
*Church Management*, November, 1960, Volume 37,  
No. 2. Used by permission.

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In the inner glow that says "Well done" after the hard planning session—  
 In the spirituals sung quietly with a group of other Christian youth—  
 In study, seeing him at work in the world and in men, through science, history, and literature—  
 In the brotherly love that manifests itself in a sacrificial gift of time or material possession—  
 In the trust and joy and awe of a small child—  
 In the thrill of seeing someone express convictions to an indifferent group—  
 In the satisfaction of seeing another soul indicate itself to the true way—  
 In the world and life itself, with all its mysterious never-failing patterns—  
 Yes, it's the same God, wherever he is.  
 GORDON ROE<sup>9</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

RAY SLOWLY:  
 "I'm looking at the stars, and thinking the worlds beyond worlds and space beyond space where God reigns. But I need not lose Him in this greatness, because He is in me, and nearer than the nearest. But His greatness can keep me from narrow ways of thinking of Him and from poor mean ways of living and loving."  
 "O God, widen my life through your greatness."<sup>10</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

"Moreover when ye fast, be not of a sad countenance like the hypocrites." (Matthew 6:16.) If only we might have sat at meat with our Lord in the homes of his many friends long ago! We are convinced that those homes rang with laughter from the voices of many in concentrated merriment. Yes, at the dining table the good Master gave some of his sweetest teaching, and there brightened many a saddened heart. . . .

One of the finest lines in Christ's greatest parable reads thus, "And they began to be merry." Ah, the return of the wandering boy, the penitence of the prodigal, the restoration of a son to the father's house, home again after a life of shame, a banquet table, friends and neighbors happy together to eat in honor of the boy's repentance, and "They began to be merry." O God, who made this beautiful world with his warming love and affection for all the sons of men, meant also that you and I should enjoy it. He meant that all should sing and shout with laughter as the years come and go, and that each of his children should have to pass that spirit long even to the unhappy and the disconsolate. . . . Of a nation under dictatorship, a traveler reported, "Rarely did I see a smiling face . . . God had been banished from their lives."

Jesus was not only the Man of Sorrows but oftentimes we find his gospel spiced with some of the happiest words ever spoken by man. "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad." "These things have I spoken unto you that your joy might remain in you and that your joy might be full." "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." "Be not sad faced like the hypocrites," and on and on he goes with a gospel of goodness to the faint-hearted,

the discouraged, and those ready to quit. "Joy to the world, the Lord is come!"  
 C. E. ROZELLE<sup>11</sup>

#### 4. "Do not neglect the gift you have." (I Timothy 4:14)

CALL: "Count us worthy, O Loving Lord, with boldness, without condemnation, in a pure heart, with a contrite spirit, with unashamed face, with sanctified lips, to dare to call upon Thee, the Holy God, Father in heaven."<sup>12</sup>

#### THE GIFT WITHIN YOU

A great many years ago an old minister at the close of a long and useful life wrote a letter to a young minister just beginning his career, a letter of warning, encouragement, and advice that has become a portion of our New Testament. It was the aged Paul writing to his son in the ministry, Timothy: "Use the life that God has given you, and use it with hand and head and heart in Christ's service." "Neglect not the gift."

Some are called to write, others to preach, still others to heal, to sell, to plow, to rule, to practice law, to cook, to sew, to teach, to manufacture, to keep house, to build, to fix machines, to fill teeth, to perform a thousand and one things. . . . In Exodus 31, God called a man by name of Bezaleel and filled him with the spirit of God to do all manner of workmanship, to work in gold and silver and brass, in cutting stones and in carving timber, in fact to be an artisan . . . the gift and grace of a noble soul going about the daily task under the great Master Workman. . . .

But if the gifts of life are many and the ability to achieve be great, then remember the words of Christ—"To whom much is given of him much shall be required." Over the tomb of General Charles Gordon in St. Paul's Cathedral are the words: "In Memory of General Charles Gordon—Who at all times and everywhere gave his strength to the weak, his substance to the poor, his sympathy to the suffering, and his heart to God."<sup>13</sup>

#### GIVING—RECEIVING

I saw the Christ today. I saw him in the face of an old blind man who was spending his last days in a Rest Home.

I introduced myself as a student social worker and he smiled as I pulled my chair close to his so that he could hear me. We talked of many things and throughout our conversation a great spirit of courage, faith, and happiness revealed itself.

I asked if he had many visitors and he said, "No, I have no family and it's too much of an effort to talk to me, I guess." His long white beard bobbed up and down as he chuckled, "I scare 'em."

I asked if he were happy and he said, "Yes, I am. I just finished all the arrangements for my last journey. I have food, clothing, a place to sleep, and this faithful old radio. What more could an old man want?"

Then he said, "May I 'see' you? Is this your face?" I put his hands upon my head and he said, "Thank you for coming."

As I left I paused a moment to look back at him. His kindly face was crinkled

with a smile and he rocked back and forth contentedly. And suddenly I knew I had seen the Christ in that face. I, who had gone to bring him cheer, felt a strange sense of warmth within.

"Who had given and who had received?" I knew humbly in my heart that this time the giver had been my old blind friend.

MARY MCQUEEN<sup>13</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

#### THE GIFT OF A CALL TO SERVE

(Meditations by a young man on deck of a Malayan riverboat, as he nears the land where he is to serve in short-term missions.)

I stand in a great tradition—  
 In the tradition of those who have stood on the deck  
 And heard the sound of waves,  
 And have seen the moon filter its rays through the warm evening mist  
 And headed for a distant city to preach the WORD OF GOD.

This is the tradition of those who dare to think they have seen the heavenly vision, however dimly and intermittently,  
 And who are content with nothing less than a determined effort to obey it, however feebly and falteringly.

And when the cynic,  
 Whether without or within, taunts:  
 "What is this vision glorious?"

Words fail.  
 But such as they are, the vision means a growing conviction

That God must really be like Jesus Christ,  
 That the knowledge and realization of this is the most potent

Seed-for-good which can be sown;  
 Therefore worth any expenditure I am able to make,  
 And that in the spending of self in this task

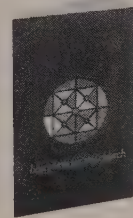
Even my modest gestures can be energized  
 By the might of the Eternal Spirit.

This is the tradition to which I belong,  
 Not a sect of the perfect,  
 The always loyal, never doubting,  
 But to the fellowship of the restless and the questing,

To those who think this Gospel is true,  
 To those who risk all to test that thesis with a life.

ELMER HALL<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup>By Elmer Hall, High Point College graduate, 1959. Used by permission.



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<sup>9</sup>By Gordon Roe (Texas), in *Power*, March 12, 1955, p. 73. See note 3.

<sup>10</sup>From *A Prayer Book for Boys*, by M. Cropper. Copyright, the Macmillan Company. Used by permission.

<sup>11</sup>Adapted from a meditation by Dr. Rozelle. Used by permission.

<sup>12</sup>From *The Liturgy of James*, third century.

<sup>13</sup>By Mary McQueen (Minnesota) in *Power*, January 26, 1951, p. 30. See note 3.





## BOOKS OFF THE PRESS

### Retarded Children: God's Children

By Sigurd D. Petersen. Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1960. 156 pp. \$3.00.

For too long churches have neglected the mentally retarded and their families, frequently because of lack of understanding and awareness or fear of inability to cope with the problems. However, neglect has also resulted from indifference or a lack of realization that the mentally retarded are persons.

The thoughtful reader of this book is forced to ask himself, "Do I think of mentally retarded persons as made in the image of God, redeemed by Christ, and capable of response to God? If so, what am I doing to make God's grace known to them?"

The author points out that the Church is charged by the One it serves to bring the message of God's redemptive love in Christ to these persons and their families. The feelings of anxiety, guilt, and frustration which both the retarded person and his parents frequently have are crucial. The Church's answer is the only one which will bring satisfying relief to these feelings.

The writer indicates that the message of Christ's love is given to the children themselves largely through nonverbal communication—feelings of love, personal relations, art, music, ritual, architecture. This puts a burden on leaders accustomed to extensive verbal teaching; Mr. Petersen suggests available training opportunities for counselors and teachers and recommends that others be provided.

The author writes out of experience as an institutional chaplain and is therefore particularly helpful to parents who are considering placement or who have a child in an institution. He also points out some of the problems faced by families with a retarded child in the home, and stresses family influence on the child. He emphasizes the importance of familial love for both the child and parents and describes some of the results of rejection and the lack of love.

The book closes with suggestions to local church leaders of ways to arouse the churches' concern for these children, to help both children and families, to provide them with Christian education and other ministries, and to help them to feel that

they are contributing members of the Christian fellowship.

This is a book which laymen and clergy alike will find challenging and interesting. Both will appreciate the author's avoidance of sentimentality and meaningless pity through his honest expression of Christian concern and his insights into the needs and abilities of retarded persons. Here is a publication which should "fester the conscience of the churches" and lead them to fulfill their mission to these persons.

ALICE L. GODDARD

### The Church Plans for Kindergarten Children

By Kathrene McLandress Tobey. Philadelphia, Westminster Press (for Cooperative Publication Association), 1959. 192 pp. \$2.75.

What are the needs and capacities which most four- and five-year-olds have in common? How does the adult take account of the fact that each child is different from any other? What kinds of experiences further the Christian nurture of kindergarten children? How can the church plan for such experiences?

These are some of the questions with which church leaders and parents will find help in this book. A word picture of a Sunday session and an analysis of it appears in one of the chapters. This is typical of the practical guidance, based on thoughtful consideration of philosophy and general principles, found in the book.

Although designed for use as a leadership training text, the book will also be helpful for individual reading as an introduction to the church's kindergarten program and its opportunities.

MARY E. VENABLE

### The Church and the Fine Arts

By Cynthia Pearl Maus and others. New York, Harper & Brothers, 1960. 902 pp. \$6.95.

Cynthia Pearl Maus has done it again. The anthologist of *Christ and the Fine Arts*, *The Old Testament and the Fine Arts*, and *The World's Great Madonnas* has, with the assistance of several competent writers and editors, produced a

new source book of pictures, poetry, music, and stories. These are selected from contributions of the fine arts to the church and of the church to the fine arts.

One detects the ecumenicity of the volume by a glance at the sweep of church history in the table of contents and through a detailed study of the contributions of such diverse creators as Edgar Guest and William Blake, Warner Sallman and Salvador Dali, and Johann Sebastian Bach and Hourmouzios Hartophylax.

The anthologist and her collaborators have included contributions from many major eras and divisions of the church. The sections on Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism will be especially valuable to the Protestant reader, for they include a good deal of material that will be unfamiliar to him.

Cynthia Pearl Maus has an appreciation for that which is catholic and exquisite in the Christian faith and which will challenge many and offend few. The selection of the hymns includes both objective hymns and subjective gospel songs. The book would have been of finer quality if some of the latter had been omitted, but it is more ecumenical by including them.

The book is well indexed and will be of value to leaders in Christian education and worship. Those who have found previous anthologies valuable will discover in this one a new mine; those who have not discovered Cynthia Pearl Maus will find this a pleasant and profitable introduction.

THOMAS P. SLAVEN

### Reading the Bible Aloud

By J. Edward Lantz. New York, Macmillan Co., 1959. 144 pp. \$3.50.

*Reading the Bible Aloud* is a useful tool for the religious educator. Its importance is based on the importance of the Bible in Christian education.

The emphasis of the book is on communication. The techniques it suggests are means to that end, and its emphasis will turn the reader's mind to initiating other techniques for the purpose of understanding the Bible.

The author describes the factors that influence the selection of a passage, step by step in preparing the reader, aspects of successful presentation including voice and diction. He has suggestions for reading aloud the Bible in family devotions, in the great congregation, and a variety of other settings. The suggestions about collects and prayers, litanies, hymns, responsive reading, lecture-reading, and choral reading will be helpful.

Appendices include reference lists to stories of Old and New Testaments, poetry, wisdom literature, men and women of the Bible, and collateral reading for those who wish to use this as a text for serious study.

R. L. HUN

### The Effective Board

By Cyril O. Houle. New York, Association Press, 1960. 174 pp. \$3.50.

"The normal activities of life may not seem, on the surface, to be governed by a board but, when examined more closely



very often reflect the fact that somewhere, around a conference table, a group of people have come together and made decisions." So says Mr. Houle in his opening paragraph.

Anyone who serves in, or is related to, a group that has to make decisions can get help from this book. It is written simply. It is practical, interesting, easily readable, down to earth with specific suggestions (including a rating scale at the end of the book to estimate the effectiveness of a board), and has a bibliography. The book deals not only with the "how" but also with the "why"—it gives reasons for having volunteer work and boards, and shows what such work does for the participants as well as for those on whose behalf the work is done.

It obviously is rooted deep in long experience, but Mr. Houle uses his experience not to mystify but to clarify. The book is not specifically "Christian" and deals primarily with public voluntary boards. Nevertheless, church people will find many values to be familiar. Also there may be boards where relations will be different from those described in the book, but much of its good sense will still be found useful.

ELMER F. ANSLEY

### Techniques of Christian Writing

Compiled and edited by Benjamin P. Towne. Philadelphia, Judson Press, 1960. 13 pp. \$5.00.

Here are pointers from forty practicing writers and editors for the beginning writer who aims for publication in the religious field. There are suggestions in article and feature writing, fiction writing, biography, drama, poetry, devotions, writing for children, with much on how and why. With two earlier books in the series, *Christian Journalism for Today*, and *The Writers' Conference Comes to You*, the lectures and discussions reported skim the team of the National Christian Writers' and Editors' Conference which is held annually at Green Lake, Wisconsin.

R. L. HUNT

### The School Bus Law

By Theodore Powell. Middletown, Wesleyan University Press, 1960. 334 pp. \$6.00.

Shall taxpayers provide bus service for pupils attending parochial and other private schools? The question is being discussed, often in a context of general church-state relations. Here is a case study of the school-bus bill presented to the legislature of Connecticut in 1957—who was for it, who was against it, and why they took their respective positions. "The whole story of the struggle for auxiliary services in Connecticut was filled with conflicts of Protestants against Catholics. Neither the Protestant nor Catholic clergy consulted the membership of their churches before committing their groups to a position on auxiliary services. . . . The fear of extreme internal division prevented multisectarian groups from considering the issue. . . . public policy statements were made only by spokesman for re-

ligious groups. Reluctance to contribute to community division and fear of economic retaliation reduced the newspaper discussion of the question.

"On the final vote on the bill, a definite influence on a House member was the existence of a parochial school in his town. . . . Many Catholic parents in such a town obviously had a direct and deep interest in the fate of the school bus bill. . . . Representatives responded to that interest.

"... winning votes is the primary concern of a political party in a democracy. . . . a political leader . . . can speak forthrightly about doing something for the farmers or teachers, for the home owner or the city dweller. It is difficult for him to say candidly that he thinks

something should be done for the Catholics or the Protestants or the Jews."

Here is much to think about.

R. L. HUNT

### The Hymn and Congregational Singing

By James R. Sydnor. Richmond, John Knox Press, 1960. 192 pp. \$4.50.

This book could be of value to the Sunday school teacher or to the laity, although it says little that would be of aid to the professional musician. Of some merit are the author's ideas on how to bring about congregational singing and on the importance of recognizing those hymns in which words and music are suitably



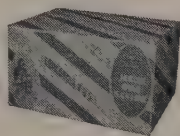
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joined. To the church school teacher his chapter on the organization and use of the hymnal should prove quite useful. Also, Mr. Sydnor gives some good points on the playing of hymns on both the piano and the organ. There is helpful instruction to church school teachers and leaders for using the best hymns with various age groups.

CHARLES EVE

## The Story of Israel

By Stephen Szikszai. Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1960. 96 pp. \$1.50.

It was the Hebrews who gave to the world a sense of history. The General Editor makes this clear in his preface to this addition to *Westminster Guides to the Bible*: "it may be argued that the Hebrew's sense of the past was what made

the future so important to him." Moreover, knowledge of that past is presupposed by those who first proclaimed the Good News.

For us, acquaintance with Hebrew history is made difficult not only because of the quantity but also because of the nature of the sources that have been preserved. Modern editors would have eliminated the duplications and ironed out the inconsistencies. There is a sense in which the Old Testament books are not so much history as the source materials out of which history can be written.

Stephen Szikszai here limits himself to the period from Joshua's conquest of Canaan to the coming of Alexander the Great, making a continuous narrative of the intervening 900 years: the rule of the judges, the establishment of the monarchy, the divided kingdom, the exile and return. He deals not only with the bib-

lical materials but also with the significance of such archaeological finds as the Amarna tablets, the Elephantine papyri, and excavations at Megiddo.

The story of the rise and fall of ancient kingdoms gains fresh relevance in a time of the waking up of nations, discussing Israel's story, the author underlines the importance of "a glance at the mass"—and his work would have gained usefulness if one had been included.

J. CARTER SWAN

## Premarital Counseling: A Manual for Ministers

By J. K. Morris. Englewood Cliffs, N. J., Prentice-Hall, 1960. 240 pp. \$5.00.

Good marriages do not happen; they are an achievement requiring thorough physiological, psychological, and spiritual preparation. The minister, as leader of the church, is in a favorable position to offer assistance to couples preparing to enter this important relationship. Such is the thesis of this book.

In an interesting, concise, yet thorough way, the author plots for the minister a helpful pattern of premarital counseling, revealing adequate psychological and clinical training illumined by theological insights.

The volume's usefulness is enhanced by an appendix containing statements of several church bodies on the purpose and significance of Christian marriage, and by a carefully selected bibliography. It should be of great value to all ministers who wish to improve their skill in premarital counseling.

JOHN W. THOMAS

## Toward Health and Wholeness

By Russell L. Dicks. New York, Macmillan Co., 1960. 158 pp. \$3.50.

A new vitality characterizes Russell Dicks' book, a vitality unlike many books on religion and health. Sharing the view that God continuously works on the sick of health, Dicks allays fears stemming from the familiar crisis-question: "What did God do this to me?"

From a clear view of the relation of mind and body, the reader is educated to a certain wisdom of healing, already present in the body at birth—a wisdom planted in the body as a "healing force of God."

The pattern of the book is one of its distinctive features. The author uses a parallel construction which distinguishes between destructive and healing emotions. Dicks contends for eight destructive emotions: anxiety, hostility, guilt, despair, loneliness, pain, boredom, and rejection. He hopes to show that by utilizing the eight healing emotions—faith, joy, self-awareness, hope, love, courage, creative work, and acceptance—a person can move toward health and wholeness.

The author again reveals the experience and understanding characteristic of his more familiar book, *The Art of Ministering to the Sick*. A silver lining in each chapter is the inclusion of meditations, psalms and prayers.

The vitality present in this work

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WESTMINSTER PRESS, Philadelphia 7







children evaluate and make a new plan for the next playing.

Books on creative dramatics are available, but few are written with a specific application in religious education.<sup>1</sup> Church school teachers should request workshops, demonstrations, recordings, and films to gain insights into the philosophy and techniques of this art.

Once a teacher uses creative dramatics with children, he will realize that the dramatic moments make worthwhile the hours he spends in learning to guide this process. To see a child create, with his whole self expressing his thoughts and feelings, is to see the miracle of growth and to know the rewards of teaching children.

<sup>1</sup>A recent and very good one is *Let's Play a Story*, by Elizabeth Allstrom, published by the Friendship Press in 1957.

## Drama for Large Meetings

(Continued from page 13)

the evening before the play is to be presented. At this time there must be a complete set-up with full crews working. (Needless to say, this may run past midnight.) The time before

the evening program (5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.) the following night must be given over entirely to set-up, quick check-up with lights and audio, and last-minute instructions to actors and stage manager. It is doubtful if a rehearsal can be attempted at this time.<sup>3</sup>

If the director can procure actors with some theater experience, the production has a better chance to be effective. Playing before thousands of people places a tremendous responsibility on everyone, particularly the actor. One important asset for the actor, other than talent, under these circumstances, is obviously a strong, well-rounded speaking voice. Finally, it is wise to choose actors on the basis of their dependability as well as their talent, since much is required of them. It is helpful to be working with mature individuals.

A final observation should be that no director who is unable to compromise a little should ever attempt convention or conference drama on a mass-audience scale. Under these conditions the director finds himself away from his own "little theater" where he knows his advantages and disadvantages. He is caught up in a milieu of new problems, over which he has little or no control, and finds he must compromise again and again if he is going to have a production. In spite of much planning, he will experience many situations at the last moment that he did not foresee, and he must be able "to keep his head when all about him are losing theirs." He must also be able to get along well with the personnel of the hall who generally know well the technical side of the theater. The stage crew may make or break the production. The stage foreman is his "right arm." The director asks for the impossible, and the stage crew will try to make it possible. These men know their business and respect the director if he knows his.

The extent of the task of producing convention drama is not always appreciated. One should hesitate to enter too hastily into such a production without (1) excellent dramatic material, (2) a good physical set-up, (3) effective lighting, scenery, and audio, (4) an adequate budget and crew help, and (5) a mature and dedicated cast.

Budget is never a small item in convention drama. Yet it should

<sup>3</sup>Again the director needs to be aware that union men on crew work are hired on a guarantee of at least three to four hours work at one stretch. If the men start at 5:00 p.m. and work until 11:00 p.m., one is involved in overtime and usually budget problems.

never be a deterring one. There are ever those who seek ways to "help" at these times. Money is necessary and a well-planned budget can save a great deal of time and help produce a finished performance.

Drama is without doubt one of the most effective ways to educate and inspire. Yet the magic world of television has taught the average observer to be highly critical of dramatic material. Hence drama in a mass-audience situation can be more than useless; it may be harmful in the very message which the drama seeks to voice. With this in mind let us move surely but discriminatingly into the use of the dramatic medium as an effective tool and inspiring voice for the Master.

## How to Select a Play

(Continued from page 26)

is good for both reading and production. If it is produced, it can be set in a medieval picture, with colorful costumes to add variety. It is effective for Lent.

*The Other Wise Man* by Henry Van Dyke, adapted by Harold Sliker (royalty upon application). One of the best adaptations of the beloved story, this play is suitable for the sanctuary. Harold Sliker always uses speaking choir effectively.

*The Travelling Man* by Lady Augusta Gregory<sup>1</sup> (royalty, \$5.00). Lady Gregory writes in a poetic vein in this play. Only three actors are needed, but one of them must be a gifted child. I believe this is my favorite one-act religious play—disarmingly simple, but rich!

*Where Love Is God Is* by Leo Tolstoy, adapted by B. Iden Payne (royalty, \$5.00). This is a good choice to remind us that there are many different kinds of Russians. I prefer this play as a production, for like the quaint properties and costumes. But it is obviously designed for reading.

<sup>1</sup>Samuel French Co., Inc., 25 West 45th St., New York 36, N. Y.

<sup>2</sup>Dramatists Play Service, 14 East 38th Street, New York 36, N. Y.

<sup>3</sup>Baker's Plays, 569 Boylston St., Boston 16, Mass.

<sup>4</sup>Longmans, Green & Co., 119 West 40th St., New York 18, N. Y.

<sup>5</sup>Religious Drama Society of Great Britain, 116 Shaftesbury Ave., London WC2, England.

<sup>6</sup>50¢, cash with order. Office of P. & D., National Council of Churches, 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, N. Y.

<sup>7</sup>Miss Amy Loomis, Vincennes University, Vincennes, Indiana.

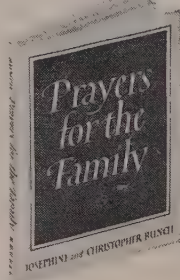
<sup>8</sup>Row-Peterson Co., Evanston, Illinois

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## PRAYERS FOR THE FAMILY

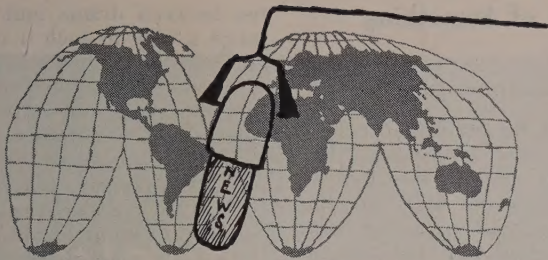
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## WHAT'S HAPPENING

### Protestant Laboratory Announced

NEW YORK, N. Y. A leadership development laboratory planned primarily to serve the needs of national, regional, and state denominational leaders—with a few local church workers included—is to be held April 16-28, 1961, at Green Lake, Wisconsin. This Protestant Laboratory is jointly sponsored by the National Council of Churches and the National Training Laboratories of Washington, D. C. Persons nationally known for their understanding and ability in group leadership will guide the experience at Green Lake.

This will be the sixth annual Protestant laboratory. Only a total of about sixty persons can be accepted because of the intensive nature of the training. Additional laboratories are now being developed by a number of denominations for their own leaders, the most extensive being that of the Protestant Episcopal Church. These have come about as a result of the Green Lake experiences and the changing concepts of church leadership.

The Protestant Laboratory will again offer three kinds of experience. One is the "T" or training group, in which the usual structures of parliamentary procedure, a definite leader, and a given purpose are "removed." The result is that the group, under the strain of the unusual situation, generates considerable emotional "heat." In the process the members discover new insights into themselves and into the ways groups work.

The second is the "skill session," in which members, by role playing and other methods, practice unfamiliar arts of working in groups.

The third is the "theory session" in which basic principles and research findings about the nature of persons and groups are presented by experts. There is opportunity to explore leadership, organizational theory, and problems of change in relation to "back home" application.

As a result of the three kinds of experience taking place within a two-week period, participants in such a laboratory find a whole new horizon about person-to-person relations in the Christian life. One participant in a laboratory wrote about its effects on him and his work:

"The laboratory added immeasurably to my ability to understand and work with people. I am now better able to understand why and how people act and react when in groups: why they get hot under the collar; how they do or do

not become motivated to action. I can better understand my own role as a group leader. I can take things which would previously have irritated me. I can keep my own needs separate from the needs of the group.

"We spend our years in college and seminary studying history, Greek, Hebrew, systematic theology, and all the rest. Then when we get out into the pastorate our biggest problems are caused by poor human relations. Not that the background of history and Hebrew isn't necessary, but the field of human relations is all-important to a successful ministry."

Further information about the 1961 Laboratory and applications for admission may be sent to either of the following:

Department of Administration and Leadership, National Council of Churches, 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, N. Y.  
National Training Laboratories, 1201 16th St. N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

### The 75th World Day of Prayer

NEW YORK, N. Y.—On February 17, 1961, millions of Christians around the world will take part in the 75th Anniversary of the World Day of Prayer. This day, the first Friday in Lent, marks the climax of the celebration that will be observed throughout the year. Plans have been formulated by The Committee of 75, headed by Mrs. Paul Moser of New York City, chairman of the World Day of Prayer for United Church Women. The theme of the worship service is "Forward Through the Ages." The service has been written by Miss Sue Weddell, formerly of the Division of Foreign Missions, National Council of Churches.

An outstanding feature of the observance is a group of thirty-seven Prayer Fellowships. Five interracial, international, interdenominational teams of four women each will go to five centers in Europe, South America, Africa, the Middle East, and East Asia to share with groups of fifty women leaders the power and relevance of prayer and its results in action for the solution of common problems. Similar Prayer Fellowships will be held in thirty-two areas in the United States and Canada. Each group will bring its concern to the Ninth National Assembly of United Church Women in Miami Beach, Florida, October 9-12, 1961.

The goal for the 75th Anniversary Offering is \$750,000, which will be distributed among several ongoing projects and

two special projects in Alaska and Africa. In the new state of Alaska, where only ten per cent of the inhabitants are related to churches, the money will be used for cooperative planning through the newly formed Council of Churches, for a more unified service to the rapidly growing, diverse community. The offering for Africa will go toward production of half a million new books written by Africans for Africans, including training of writers, editors, artists, printers, and distribution specialists. It will also aid in the plans for the use of mass communications through scholarships for young Africans seeking to become script writers, newscasters, and program planners for the radio networks that are being built all over Africa.

### New Head of Drama Council in Canada

TORONTO, Ont.—THE REV. GORDON PARKER has been appointed National Director of the Christian Drama Council of Canada, succeeding Miss MARION BRILLINGER. Mr. Parker is an ordained minister of the United Church of Canada and attended seminary in Winnipeg.

After graduation from the University of Manitoba, with special training in public speaking and singing, Mr. Parker participated in the Musical Comedy Guild of Winnipeg and the Winnipeg Summer Theater Association. He has also taken part in music and drama productions on radio and television and has written and produced various shows for live presentation.

For further details about the work of the Christian Drama Council of Canada, see the article by Douglas Maxwell in this issue of the *Journal*.

### Playwrights and Dancers Express Religious Insights

NEW YORK, N. Y.—The first church-sponsored consultation on the dance, followed by a meeting of the Commission on Drama of the National Council of Churches, was held November 16 and 17 at Riverside Church. The meetings were arranged by the REV. MARVIN P. HALVERSON, executive director of the NCC Department of Worship and the Arts.

At the consultation on the dance RUTH ST. DENIS, MARGARET FISK TAYLOR, and ERICK HAWKINS participated in discussing and interpreting the dance as an expression of worship. Demonstrations of religious dance were given on the stage of the Theater in the Riverside Church.

Playwrights and clergy spent the second day examining so-called religious drama and religious themes in contemporary plays. Among those taking part in the discussion were ALEXANDER FEDEROFF, author of *Day of Grace*; Lyon Phelps, who wrote *The Gospel Witch*; DONALD HERRON, star of *The Tenth Man*; and PAMELA ILOTT, director of religious programming for CBS.

"What the theater needs," Mr. Halverson declared, "is not so much new techniques of production of plays as plays of dramatic worth which scale the heights and plumb the depths of man's life."



## Dr. Stedman Appointed NCC Director of Interpretation

NEW YORK, N. Y.—DR. MURRAY S. STEDMAN, JR., has been appointed general director of interpretation for the National Council of Churches. He will coordinate and give administrative guidance to the several interpretative operations of the Council already functioning. This position was formerly held by JAMES W. WINE, who resigned to take up political public relations duties in Washington, D. C. Dr. Stedman has been for the past three years director of the Office of Information, United Presbyterian Church, U. S. A. He has a Ph.D. degree from Columbia University and has taught at Columbia, Brown University, and Swarthmore College. He has worked with the Department of State and with UNESCO.

## Dr. Mueller Reelected Head of Division of Christian Education

NEW YORK, N. Y.—The General Assembly of the National Council of Churches, meeting in San Francisco December 4-9, reelected BISHOP REUBEN H. MUELLER as Vice President for the Division of Christian Education, a position he has held since 1957. Bishop Mueller is President of the Board of Missions of the Evangelical United Brethren Church. As President of the Council for 1961-63, the Assembly elected a layman of the Disciples of Christ, MR. J. IRWIN MILLER, of Columbus, Indiana.

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## The Power of Something Inward

(Continued from page 15)

remains after the performance of a play and discusses its meaning. The most complex use is the method called "situation drama." In this case the actors read up to the point of crisis in a play and stop. Members of the audience then divide into groups to discuss the characters, problems, and possible solutions. After sharing findings with each other, they listen to the actors read the rest of the play. Then they are given the chance to judge whether the playwright handled his characters and problems in a realistic fashion. In some cases members of the audience act out their solutions. In any event, the process is used to help an audience become aware of problems, delve into character motivation, and seek some solutions. The end result is to stimulate thinking.

Space limitation does not permit detailed description of staging and rehearsal procedures. Additional information can be found in "Play-readings Can Be Fun" in the July-August 1957 issue of the *Journal* and in the booklet by Amy Loomis, "How to Dramatize Your Fellowship Meeting."<sup>1</sup>

There seems to be little doubt that informal dramatics is a proven area of dramatic presentation. The professional stages of New York have used it increasingly in recent years. Small churches have found it to be exciting and effective. Young Japanese students are using it in their churches. And recently a church in Brazil found it to be a powerful and significant way of seeing life in Christian perspective. Wherever there is the dramatic spirit and the dramatic imagination, informal drama will be presented vigorously and persuasively.

<sup>1</sup>Baptist Youth Fellowship, 1703 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia 3, Pennsylvania.

## The Christian Use of Drama

(Continued from page 5)

is rarely if ever true that drama is worship. For although there may be a high degree of audience *involvement* in a play, and I think the more the better, still this involvement is a psychological phenomenon of the moment and is not the same thing as actual *participation*.

When church drama directors who have been impressed with the similari-

ties between drama and worship arrange a play in such a way that the audience will respond to it as "a worship experience," they only confuse everything and lead to the corruption of worship. There is no such thing as "a worship experience" that is not in fact the experience of worship. One gets this experience by worshipping, not by pretending as at a play.

There is much harm done by the attempt to turn drama into worship. What should be done is that an audience that has shared in the experience of a play in which the imagination has been quickened to things of the spirit may afterwards be asked to turn itself from an audience into congregation and to perform the act of worship, with its praise, confession, intercession, and thanksgiving. Yet even this, for psychological reasons, is often hazardous if the act of worship follows too closely the seeing of the play. This is because a play has its own life, form, rhythm, and idiom, and worship has all these things, too. When the form, rhythm, and idiom of the play is put side by side with the form, rhythm, and idiom of worship, the two may fight each other, leaving a person surfeited and confused as he often is after seeing a double-feature movie.

All that I have said ought to point to the fact that drama is not to be confused with, or substituted for, the preaching and worshipping life of the church. On the other hand, I hope some readers may have come to see that the drama may be very important as a supplement to these traditional things. Whatever in our day quickens the imagination of persons is an asset to the church, even though sometimes what does the quickening may appear to be something unchristian or even antichristian.

Fortunately there are also available to Christians a number of plays that quicken the imagination in ways quite congenial to Christian thought. If they are rightly interpreted and presented at the appropriate occasion there is room in church programs for plays that cover the spectrum from Tennessee Williams to Charles Williams. The former will not necessarily corrupt a spectator, nor will the latter necessarily convert him. The only thing that corrupts is shoddy material in contrast to art, and the only thing that converts is the Holy Spirit. Each kind of play, if it is in fact artistic, presents the preacher and all Christian laymen with an opportunity to speak to their neighbors more relevantly about the truth which is in Christ. What the play does is to open up such opportunity—nothing more. But what more do we want?



"a place  
called  
Golgotha ..."

(Matthew 27:33)



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